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The truth of the Christian
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THE TRUTH

OF THE

CHRISTIAN RELIGION

PRINTED BY MORRISON AND GIBB,

FOR

T. & T. CLARK, EDINBURGH.

LONDON: SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, HAMILTON, KENT, AND CO. LIMITED.

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THE TRUTH

OF THE

CHRISTIAN RELIGION

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VOLUME II.

EDINBURGH
T. & T. CLARK, 38 GEORGE STREET
1894

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Second Division

THE PROOF OF CHRISTIANITY

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THE PROOF OF CHRISTIANITY.

CHAPTER I.

KNOWLEDGE.

Common Knowledge and its Characteristics—Ideal Knowledge—General Notions and Judgments—Things and their Properties; Cause and Effect—Science a completion of Common Knowledge, not an approximation to Ideal Knowledge—Necessary and *a priori* cognition; Logic and Mathematics—Conclusion.

It may be regarded as an established fact that a dissertation on the last and highest subjects of human knowledge must commence with a discussion of a somewhat general nature bearing upon the Theory of Knowledge. Even theology, so far as it has an Apologetic function to discharge, cannot and dare not at the present day stand aloof from such a discussion. Otherwise it remains lagging behind and cannot perform its duty. I do not certainly regard this state of things as ideal. It would be much more to the purpose if such questions fell into the background, and if as far as possible undivided attention could be directed to the *matter in hand*. And as there has been a time when the problem of the Theory of Knowledge did not occupy the foremost place in men's

interest, and when the divergences of view in reference to it were confined within fixed limits, we are warranted in cleaving to the hope that some similar state of things may be repeated once more. So long as every rather original genius has his own Theory of Knowledge, and so long as men's views on that subject run counter to each other in the most extreme degree, philosophy is at all events not in a sound state. So also, I think, every Theory of Knowledge bears within itself the seeds of death, that requires to be kept constantly in mind when we are apprehending and judging things in detail. Only that will be the true theory which, after rendering the important services it has to offer, falls modestly into the background behind the real objects of knowledge, and can be forgotten. A theory about the muscles does not assist one to remove so much as a single stone out of the way; and just as little does a Theory of Knowledge satisfy the *need of knowledge;* and it ought, like the other, to have significance only for the physician, whom it enables to remove disturbances that have crept in and to restore the normal course of things.

However, as matters are situated at the present day, a discussion bearing on the Theory of Knowledge is indispensable when we are treating of the highest questions and most important spiritual interests of the human race. And now, if it is true in every scientific inquiry, especially in one of an abstract nature, that the choice of the starting-point is of the greatest importance, that is doubly the case here, where we have to do with the common agreement which determines all that follows, and where that choice may decide, as will perhaps

hardly be possible in any other instance, as to the whole course of the inquiry. What *starting-point* are we then to choose?

What must determine this choice is the circumstance that we are seeking *to come to an understanding with others*, or, if it is by any means possible, with all.

To this assertion it may no doubt be objected, that sometimes the solitary thinker seeks the truth for himself and only for himself, without being concerned about coming to such an understanding with others. But the objection is of no moment. In the first place, it may fairly be asked whether the impulse to communicate truth does not naturally grow out of the search for it and the discovery of it; whether it is not a case as rare as it is abnormal, if that does not occur in any way; whether, indeed, there is truth at all for the individual *as such*, since what the word denotes really exists from the nature of it for every one, and is meant to exist for every one. But above all it would be advisable even for the solitary thinker to seek the truth which he craves only for himself, just as if he wanted to come to an understanding with all mankind and to convince all. If he fails to do so, he may rest assured that instead of finding truth he will find error. He takes with him on his career a sure guarantee of that as a matter of course, in the form of his own likes and dislikes; and he does not want to do that, we may be sure, if he is really concerned about the *truth*. Thus it cannot but be the case that the purpose of coming to an understanding with others, and if possible with all, must decide as to the choice of the starting-point.

Now, such an understanding is always reached only

where a *fact* forms the object of the inquiry, one which is given in the same way for all; and only in that case can we think of an understanding. Common experience teaches that in no ambiguous way. If therefore an inquiry like that contemplated here is not to be hopeless from the first as regards the purpose of coming to an understanding with people, it must take such a fact as its object. But then that can be nothing else here except *the fact of knowledge*, *i.e.* what we all without exception understand by that when we say we do or do not know anything; so that every more precise philosophical conception or definition of knowledge is thus in the first instance put entirely aside. Even the philosopher, in daily life, when seeking to come to an understanding with others, though the notion of knowledge propounded and defended by him may turn out in other circumstances what it will, really understands the same thing by knowledge that is commonly understood by it. The diverging view of the philosophers, and again the differences of opinion within the sphere of philosophy, do not therefore infringe the universal acceptance of this starting-point.

Undoubtedly it is not the common practice to choose the starting-point in this fashion. The father of modern philosophy, Descartes, begins exactly in the opposite way, by doubting everything that we know or think we know. Kant at the outset formulates the decisive question by asking whether synthetic judgments *a priori* are possible. Herbart starts with the fact that ordinary experience and consequently common knowledge contains contradictions: by correcting

these he seeks to arrive at pure knowledge. And to name among the rest a theological inquirer of the present day, Herrmann,[1] following Kant, first of all investigates "pure knowledge," *i.e.* something of which he himself says it is abstract; whence the question at once arises whether all others actually regard the basal abstraction as necessary and are willing to join in forming it. We see that nothing is further from the intention of all these inquirers than to start with an investigation of common knowledge. If, notwithstanding, this starting-point seems to us the strictly natural one, and to be the one required by our problem, the question presses itself upon us why it is despised by most. And it is worth while to raise it, because the process of answering it serves to put the decisive point in the proper light.

Now the answer is not far to seek. What all those who have been mentioned are in search of is not at all a *common understanding with regard to knowledge in the ordinary sense of the word*, but a standpoint exalted above it from which ordinary knowledge can be judged. In other words, what they are in search of from the first is knowledge of a kind that really deserves the name, *that answers to an ideal of knowledge which is conceived in this way or that*—a circumstance that must be noted here at once and have special attention drawn to it. As against that procedure we assert all the more emphatically that it does not serve the purpose to take an Ideal which is brought with one as the starting-point of a discussion

[1] *Die Religion im Verhältniss zum Welterkennen und zur Sittlichkeit*, Halle, 1879, p. 16 ff.

which aims at securing an understanding with others; that it is rather the only correct procedure to begin with the investigation of given facts. Not as though for us too the question what is true and pure knowledge did not lie nearest our heart as being the most vital. But experience teaches that it is a hazardous course to place the Ideal at the commencement, since every one has his own Ideal, and no person can convince another. Even the simplest questions in that case can often be cleared up only with difficulty, because every one apprehends them from his own peculiar point of view. There is further the fact that knowledge is of all things a matter in which the first question is not what and how we *ought* to know or *wish* to know, but rather what and how we *can* know. In common life there is no doubt on that point. The more urgently we really require to know anything, the less do we linger over what would be desirable or what ought to be, and the more eagerly do we consider the ways and means which are available for us, and employ the powers which are at our disposal. And if the former prove to be useless, and if the latter fail, no ardent longing, no Categorical Imperative, helps us to get over the fact that in the given case we *can know nothing*. Now the same is the case with regard to knowledge as a whole. The question is as Kant formulated it: What *can* I know? It is a question of *power*, and therefore a *quæstio facti*. For that reason too it is necessary to begin neither by judging according to a presupposed ideal, nor by asking whether a definite ideal can be realised, but with the simple question what we all understand by know-

ledge, and what we are permitted in that way to know.

There are others who seemingly take the same course which we intend to follow. Trendelenburg, *e.g.*, in his *Inquiries in Logic*, declares the fact of the sciences to be the fixed point from which we have to set out. Baumann, in his *Philosophy considered as a means of becoming acquainted with the World*, takes existing knowledge as the starting-point of his study; and Goering, in his *System of Critical Philosophy*, follows him there. Wundt, too, in his *Logic*, which also contains a Theory of Knowledge, analyses existing knowledge in the interest of that theory, and he too deals principally with scientific knowledge. And such examples might easily be multiplied. All these investigators, however, understand the matter in a different sense from that which is here meant. They understand it in such a way that they even advance directly by means of this inquiry to a valuation of knowledge, to a decision on the fundamental question regarding the relation of Thought and Being, either attacking that question immediately, or at all events keeping it in view throughout. But that means simply that from the first they understand the fact of knowledge in a definite sense, according to which it already implicitly contains a decision of the fundamental question referred to. That is especially proved by the fondness they at once show for scientific knowledge and their eagerness to get beyond ordinary common knowledge.

By ourselves, on the other hand, the fact of Knowledge which forms the object of study is by no means

taken in a preconceived sense. Rather in the same perfectly simple way in which other facts are investigated, this fact is here to be the object of investigation. What we understand by that knowledge, of which no one doubts that it exists, since we make use of it daily, and without its aid would have to resign our position in the world as men; how it originates; how far it can extend; whether, if we increase it sufficiently, we can count upon getting an answer to the question regarding the First Cause and the Final Purpose of the world—these are the questions which are to occupy us. And so we mean by knowledge not simply and not chiefly scientific knowledge. It is rather above all *the common knowledge of daily life* that we have in view. Whether the knowledge supplied by science is otherwise circumstanced than this species is, and what the difference consists in, will afterwards, it is true, require to be brought out in the course of the inquiry. Nothing comes of attempting any preliminary settlement of that matter.

But now it follows undoubtedly from what has been said, from the mode in which the problem has been presented here, that the treatment of it will assume throughout a *provisional and relative* character, and that we must continue all along to be conscious of that fact. We cannot expect that from this mode of treatment and from it alone we shall be able to obtain a decisive answer to the fundamental question regarding the relation of Thought and Being. As soon as such a result came out, it would simply be a proof that a mistake had been committed, that without its being noticed the inquiry had somewhere been shifted

over to other ground. That is, it is by no means denied that this inquiry can furnish a contribution, and one too of considerable value, to the solution of the question referred to, so far as any solution is possible. Only what cannot be admitted is that any such decisive result could be got from it if taken apart by itself. But as far as I see, the only possible way to the desired end, *i.e.* to an understanding with people, is taken when we begin in the manner stated, with *a discussion of a provisional and relative character*. For a discussion of a different type, the first requisite, a *common starting-point* that is understood by all in the same sense, is really not to be had. In every other kind, therefore, it follows from the nature of the case, as experience amply teaches, that the ways chosen diverge at the first step.

But the special interest, moreover, that leads us to set about the whole discussion, recommends this as the design for it. For there is certainly no doubt of this, that we men possess a real knowledge of the world by which we are surrounded—else our race would long since have disappeared from the face of the earth—and that there are generally recognised standards by which we judge of the truth and accuracy of that knowledge. If now it could be shown that in the same way in which that knowledge is obtained we can also gain such knowledge with regard to the First Cause and the Final Purpose of things, the matter would substantially be settled. We would not in that case feel warranted in delaying to follow the path so opened up, and the connecting links required for the proof of Christianity would be secured. The

relative character of the whole discussion might then be safely forgotten. For if it proved to us that there is a real knowledge of the First Cause and the Final Purpose of the world, a trustworthy kind of knowledge like what we have of the world, on the strength of which we act every day and that too with confidence, a species of knowledge, therefore, with which we might in like manner allow our eternal interests to be bound up—I should like to see the person who wanted anything more. As the practical man of the world ridicules the philosophical critic who undertakes to instruct him about Phenomena and Things-in-themselves, we might in the case supposed safely put aside all doubt about the highest truths as idle talk, about which the rational Christian no longer requires to trouble himself. But if it should appear, on the contrary, that the knowledge common to us all can never be extended till it furnishes an answer to the ultimate questions which were alluded to, that would likewise be a considerable gain, although in a different way. It would follow in that case, that we could not look in this direction for the proof of Christianity or for the connecting links necessary for that proof. The relative character of the discussion would then preserve its full significance; and it would be proved to be necessary that we should proceed along other paths in search of the object aspired to. But not merely that: the insight which had been gained would further enable us to recognise all objections to the Christian faith such as are brought against it on the ground of data derived from this common knowledge, as being in that form at all events unfounded, as well as to convict

of error the attempts made to meet them by argumentation resting upon their own presuppositions. Whatever, therefore, the result may turn out to be, we shall be helped on our way by means of it.

But where are we to turn now with the question, What is knowledge, and what does it mean? It seems to be suggested that we should go for information on the matter to Psychology, since knowledge is a fact of that inner life with which that science is concerned. As a matter of fact, there are those even yet who jumble together questions relating to the Theory of Knowledge and questions of Psychology (and indeed even questions of Physiology)! Undoubtedly that is a mistake. It may serve to make the treatment exhaustive if an accurate description is given of the psychical phenomenon of Knowledge. So too this or that topic must occasionally be introduced about which Psychology gives more accurate information. But what knowledge is, it cannot tell. As little can it do so as it can give information about the opposites good and evil, beautiful and ugly, and supply a full interpretation of them. It can only describe the psychical processes by which such judgments of approval or disapproval are formed. It must presuppose that he who asks the information has been instructed in some other way regarding the meaning of those judgments. The case is just the same with knowledge. One must already be instructed in another way than by Psychology as to what knowledge is, if one questions Psychology about the origin of it; and only if that is the case will the question on the latter point be raised, or will it even be possible to direct one's

attention to those inner processes in contradistinction to all others.

And it may be proved still more conclusively that with *our* question we have not to turn to Psychology. For the person who does so, who does so in sincerity, so much so that he really expects a decisive answer from Psychology, understands the question in a different sense, and must understand it in a different sense, from that which we have just assigned to it. For he can only do so in order to determine by an analysis of the Physiological and Psychological processes, how much of the knowledge which we think we possess goes to the account of the knowing mind, and what proportion of it can be taken as applying to the objects, to their real essence as independent of that mind. That is, by doing so he shows that he is not satisfied with ordinary knowledge, that from the first it is the ideal that floats before his mind. But that is just what we wanted to avoid. Consequently with *our* question regarding knowledge we must in no case turn to Psychology.

There remains the objection that perhaps a surer starting-point might be given by Psychology, without its being necessary that the inquiry should assume the provisional and relative character that was spoken of. However, it is not difficult to remove that doubt. The Physiological and Psychological discussion must seek its object in the world of common experience. It analyses the processes of consciousness as data supplied in this world, obtained in it in consequence of the reciprocal action between man and things. It speaks of the stimuli which things apply to us, of the

sensations thereby induced, etc. In other words, *it confines itself in its inquiry to the ground of common consciousness.* The Physiology of Sense-Perception leads, it is true, to results that do not agree with common consciousness, and which are made clear, therefore, only with difficulty, or not at all, to the person who is not schooled in science. But the standpoint is the same in principle. Strict science is quite unable to do otherwise than plant itself on this ground, because it has achieved all its successes by doing so. However, therefore, the "picture of the world drawn by science" differs from the "naïve" conception, and the scientific consciousness from that of the plain man, there is really no difference to be found *in respect to the fundamental question* regarding the relation of Thought and Being. Science itself simply presupposes that the world is as it is capable of knowing that world, with the means at its disposal. A starting-point apart from or above common consciousness is not to be got from Psychology; and therefore nothing is to be had that could help us at the outset to get over the provisional and relative character of the inquiry.

We turn, therefore, with our question not to Psychology, but to the *common consciousness* and the common conviction of men, as they have come to be expressed in the daily *speech* common to us all without exception.

Now, if we do so, it is found that it is invariably a Fact, something actual or really given, that forms the content of Knowledge. If I affirm that I know something—no matter whether I am wrong or not—I mean that my assertion agrees with the reality, and that I

have every reason to be convinced that such is the case. The common notion of knowledge is therefore in a similar position with the common notion of truth previously treated of (I. p. 5). Here too what is "real" has to be understood in the sense that what is known is actually as it is, and no one by the judgment he passes can make any difference upon it. If, therefore, I think I know something, I am at the same time convinced that the propositions in which I express that knowledge are true. And here too the meaning is that such is in fact the case, no matter in the least how many do or do not know it, and no matter whether I know it or not. In so far the two propositions approximate towards each other, when we say that something is true or that we know it. What is known, however, forms a narrower circle in the field of truth. An Opinion, too, can be true, and religious Faith is always regarded as true by him who adheres to it. But neither in the one case nor in the other do we speak of such a thing as Knowledge. An Opinion is Knowledge of an incomplete kind, supplemented rightly or wrongly by the mind's judgment; while Faith lies in quite a different sphere from both Knowledge and Opinion, since the personal experience of man, his inward freedom, decides as to Faith and Unbelief. In contradistinction to Faith and Opinion, Knowledge signifies that we are convinced of the state of things in a manner that admits of no doubt. We may of course be wrong in that conviction, and often are. But yet if we say we know anything, we mean this and nothing else. The reason, however, why doubt is excluded is because fact has constrained us, laid us under necessity, and Know-

ledge means simply the perception that this or that is so. This, then, is what we all understand by Knowledge. One who finds this doubtful may simply reflect for a moment on the cases in which he has assured another person, by saying emphatically, so as to cut short all further dispute—"I *know* it is the case." If the word "know" may have occasionally lost its full force in daily speech, in such cases it has recovered it in all its strictness.

Still further, Knowledge is in principle communicable, and can always be a general possession. We do not claim to be able to impose our Opinions on others; at least we do not, so long as we are aware that they are nothing but opinions. Our Faith we would like to make the common good of all. But we know that no one can be compelled to have faith, because in the matter of personal conviction inward freedom is concerned. On the other hand, if we are conscious that we know something, we expect every one likewise to recognise what is known. We suppose every one can be compelled to do so; and if it is impossible, that is never due to the fact, but has always an accidental cause. One who has seen a strange natural phenomenon, or read definite words in a letter which was afterwards destroyed, *knows* the matter whichever it is, and expects every one to recognise it as real, although the means are accidentally wanting that would enable him to overcome any doubt that may exist on the part of others. But it is not surprising, moreover, that such is the case, that Knowledge is always communicable and can become a general possession. For it has not, like Faith, its determining cause in us, in our personal

freedom and conviction, but in things which lay us under compulsion, and as to which we assume, therefore, that they bring the same constraint to bear on all other people.

We have still a final characteristic to mention, and it is not the least important. If we know anything or merely think we do so (for this difference is of no moment here), we count upon it in our practical action, and that too without hesitation and with confidence, even if our life and well-being are at stake in that action. On the other hand, we have regard in our action to an Opinion, only in the case where we can arrive at no definite knowledge and yet must take action—a case that often enough occurs. In our Faith we recognise an unconditional law for our life, and seek in it the power to do what faith prescribes, without, however, being ever able to reach the height of faultless perfection. Here again, therefore, Knowledge is differently circumstanced from Faith and Opinion. And here it is shown in the most unambiguous manner that what is known is invariably something actually given, something real, or is held to be that, as the case may be. For everything is real for us which we and our life depend on. Whether we hold a thing to be real or not, may always be infallibly determined by the test whether or not we are guided by it when concerned for our life, or in the action we take which is calculated to realise definite aims. Knowledge stands that test thoroughly. What is known is therefore, in the view of him who knows, invariably something real; and only something held to be real can be the content of Knowledge.

The source of all our certain knowledge is in the last

resort *Experience*. This follows from what we have now learned to be the common notion of knowledge. For if knowledge is the apprehension of what is real, it is by experience and experience alone that we become acquainted with what is real. In other words, if there is knowledge only of facts which lay us somehow under constraint, experience is synonymous with that intercourse with things from which such constraint is derived. At the present day it is our own experience by far the least that our knowledge rests upon. The experience of others and their communication of it lies partly or even exclusively at the basis of much knowledge about which we have no doubt. That would not be possible unless knowledge, as was shown, were always communicable and could become a general possession. On this fact depends, on the one hand, the enlargement of our knowledge. On the other hand, doubtless, owing to that same fact, the possibility of error increases. For in the case of every communication of knowledge it is a question whether one really succeeds in producing in the other person exactly or indeed substantially the same condition of mind which is brought about by means of knowledge in the informant. Innumerable errors arise from the fact that so often there is no success there. But no one doubts for that reason that the knowledge which rests principally on the experience of others, and is thereby infinitely widened, is to be preferred to the knowledge which is based only on one's own experience. Indeed, the individual among us who should limit himself to knowledge of the latter kind, with the conditions of human civilisation developed as they are at the present

day, would simply have to go to the wall; so that the question what we would prefer cannot possibly come up. And certainly, in practical life, no one who thinks for a little is so pretentious as to mean that he possesses knowledge which is absolutely free from error, or so presumptuous as to assert that of himself. And if there were any one who did so, he would be counted by people generally a fool for continuing to set at nought on every occasion the teaching of experience which declared the contrary, and from which he is not spared any more than other mortals. That judgment would be pronounced on him even by those who in another connection bring the charge of Scepticism freely and without hesitation against any one who questions the absolute character of our knowledge.

Experience, then, whether our own or that of others, is the sole source of our knowledge. Or is that not so? No one takes action on the strength of any other kind of knowledge than that which is derived from experience, whether ordinary or scientific (*i.e.* artificially extended and corrected) experience, or which, if there can be no direct experience, is inferred from it, as the case may be. But only that is real knowledge on the strength of which one takes action without hesitation in the interest of the purposes he has in view, or on the strength of which he would take action if it fell to be considered with reference to those purposes, which comes to be equivalent, therefore, to that knowledge which plays such a part in daily life. All other kinds are painted scenes in a theatre formed by one's own fancy, however high-sounding names they may be designated by.

There is a thorough-going *distinction occurring in the matter of our experience*, and therefore among the objects of our knowledge, a distinction of such importance that we must mention it at once at this point. Our experience is partly sensuous, partly mental and historical. In other words, the objects of our knowledge belong partly to the world of sense merely, partly also to the mental and historical life of humanity—this notion being taken in the widest sense of the expression, embracing therefore not only the past but the present as well, and not merely what is wont to be recorded and handed down as history, but in general the whole issue of man's mental life. In the one case experience and knowledge are arrived at by means of the senses; in the other case experience itself consists in those inward impressions which form the mental life of man; and a share in the latter experience is a further and indispensable means of knowledge.

It is true, while we make this distinction, that it is not one that could be compared to a well-marked dividing line running across the field of reality. The two sections are not really separated from one another; rather does the historical life subsist and develop itself on a sensuous basis. What we understand by the mental and historical life is quite inconceivable without the world of sense that surrounds us. Even the facts of mental life known to us are localised for our consciousness in this world as conditioned by Time and Space. That is true even of our personal experiences, not necessarily, we admit, while we are immediately undergoing them, but certainly in so far as we subse-

quently proceed to make them the object of knowledge, and give them the form of knowledge. Thus it might almost seem wrong to introduce a distinction here, which, when carried out more precisely, involves so many difficult and complicated questions. In truth, however, there is no ground for such misgiving. What we mean by the distinction stated is a simple and indisputable fact of ordinary knowledge, and of our consciousness with respect to that knowledge. We are not concerned with the question how the difference, the connection, and reciprocal action, between the things belonging to sense and man's mental and historical life are to be understood. We allude simply to the circumstance that everything we know belongs to one or other of these two spheres, and that from this particular point of view of knowledge a great distinction is brought out. It is the distinction indicated above to the effect that in order to comprehend man's historical life, we must call into requisition inferences from analogy drawn from our own personal life and experience, and even do so continually; whereas in the other field of merely sensuous experience, this importation of our own Ego into the objects of knowledge acts in a misleading manner and must be carefully avoided. But if any one should object that the animal world at least forms an intermediate sphere between the two others, we have to reply that our knowledge of animal life contains so much that is founded on supposition, for the very reason that here too we take the analogy of our own life as the basis of our knowledge, and are then obliged again to introduce qualifications to an indefinite extent.

But in particular it must be pointed out that nothing prevents us from adhering strictly to the point of view we have adopted, *i.e.* from understanding in the exact sense of the expression the inferences from analogy which are drawn from our own life, and which are necessary for the comprehension of history; and that it is this that represents our ordinary consciousness. But if we do so, if the point of view is interpreted strictly, we have to do here undeniably with a clear, simple, and indisputable fact.

However, the distinction thus made in the matter of knowledge presupposes a certain maturity and development of consciousness. Children in the earlier period of life import their own Ego into the things of nature and the processes apprehended by sense, no less than into the phenomena of human life. Among uncivilised peoples, too, something of a like nature may be observed. On that account, man seems not to be inclined naturally to form the distinction spoken of; not, however, because at first all is to him only Nature, but because his first impulse is to conceive and judge what he finds outside himself according to the analogy of his own life. Everything is to him a Being having a separate existence, just as he himself distinguishes himself in his consciousness from all else. Every occurrence is to him an effect; just as he himself knows in his own case that he can produce changes by interposing actively in the course of things. For him the changeful world is composed of nothing but the actions of known and unknown Beings. And as he himself prosecutes purposes in what he does, aims at realising his wishes, he looks upon Things as doing the same. However, only

a little personal reflection is needed to make the distinction that was mentioned become apparent, and assume a more and more definite form. Among us it is left to poetry to ascribe animation to the things of nature and the processes apprehended by sense. At least no one will admit that he allows himself to be influenced by that habit except perhaps in poetic contemplation and description. Whether this view is right, whether we are at all in a position ever to get completely over this inclination to import our own life into Nature, will come out in the course of our inquiry. For the present it is enough that attention has been drawn at this early stage to this distinction which exists among the objects of our knowledge, and to what that distinction signifies.

Our inquiry is thus put upon the modest footing of a relative and provisional discussion, which carefully leaves alone the fundamental question of the relation of Thought and Being, and confines itself within the limits of common consciousness. Only thus, viz. by beginning with the investigation of knowledge as a given fact, do we believe we have a starting-point accepted by all; and that again seems to us to be the condition on which any understanding with others is arrived at. But the question what knowledge means we answer by saying, that all the world understands by it an apprehension of that which is real or actually given, which presses itself on our notice whether we will or no; and that all the world therefore distinguishes Knowledge from religious Faith as well as from mere Opinion. We infer from that—and here again we are in harmony with the common judgment of men—that knowledge is in

principle something that can be possessed by people in common; and also that all certain knowledge rests on experience as signifying reciprocal action between men and things. Lastly, we conclude this first study of our subject with the observation that there is a difference between the objects of knowledge in regard specially to the kind of knowledge, a difference, to put it briefly, between Nature and History; and that this distinction which is made, in spite of an opposite inclination in man leading him to import his own constitution into Nature, is also quite familiar to the common consciousness of mankind.

Knowledge is originally a knowledge of *Individual* things and occurrences. This is the case for the reason that it is derived from experience, and experience acquaints us immediately only with individual facts. So long as consciousness is not yet far enough developed to resolve the general impression formed of the surrounding world into its elements, there is not yet experience and not yet knowledge. If this stage is reached, knowledge commences with the apprehension of individual objects. And there is no sphere of human knowledge, however well developed it is at the present day, in which apprehension did not begin with the apprehension of individual things. Hence knowledge of what is individual is the first and original kind, is the really primitive and fundamental knowledge, that on which our whole knowledge is based.

And this not in the order of time merely: from another point of view as well, the knowledge of what is individual takes the lead. Only that kind can, at least

approximately, satisfy the Notion, or, as I would prefer to say, the *Ideal, of Knowledge.*

It may doubtless seem to be a contradiction when I introduce even here the notion of an Ideal Knowledge, after declaring at the outset that it is erroneous and inexpedient to begin the inquiry not with the discussion of a given fact but by setting up an ideal. However, there is by no means any such contradiction. The course which I rejected was that in which there is taken as the starting-point such a conception of ideal knowledge *as transcends the limits of common consciousness.* Now we have nothing to do with that here, but simply with what is regarded *within the sphere of common consciousness* as a perfect realisation of knowledge, and has to stand for that. We cannot represent to ourselves any mental function whatever, and cannot direct our attention to any word that indicates such a function, without the idea of a perfect exercise of it, or of a complete realisation of what the word indicates, being immediately presented to us; and therefore we cannot do so without the word acquiring a corresponding ideal collateral signification, apart from and simultaneously with the fact that it is the term for a known process. That is the case with knowledge also; and only in this sense is an ideal of it here spoken of. On this point too we can appeal to common consciousness and the experience of all. Every one has been in the position of judging a given item of knowledge in respect to its value, and that not from any adventitious standpoint, but from the very standpoint of knowledge itself. And in a judgment of the kind we all make use of *the same* standard.

An item of knowledge may, so far as it goes, be true and a real piece of knowledge, but yet it is not of much use because it is neither exact nor complete. On the other hand, together with truth it may contain error, and thereby partly or entirely lose its value. Now, an ideal species of knowledge is the kind in which none of these drawbacks exists, the kind which is *free from error, complete, and exact.* In affirming this we are not resting on any subjective presuppositions and framing an ideal of knowledge devised by our own fancy, but we are exhibiting a point of view from which, consciously or unconsciously, every one daily estimates the value of all actual knowledge.

And now my point is, that only the knowledge of individual things and processes can answer, at least approximately, to this ideal of knowledge. Approximately—for of a *complete* realisation of the ideal there can be as little thought here as in other human concerns. It is only particular elements of experience that we ordinarily take note of; as a rule, we have no time to fix our view on them all. Even if we purposely and deliberately isolate a thing or process, and make it the object of inquiry, who that can conceive what *absolute completeness and exactness* signifies, will ever be quite sure that the ideal is perfectly realised? Approximately—perhaps, indeed, reaching a very great degree of closeness; but absolutely, in the sense that not an atom has escaped notice, and that the particular instance is completely and exactly apprehended in its definite individuality and in all its aspects—this certainly only in the rarest cases. And then these are simply cases that scientific research

alone knows anything of; whereas in ordinary experience and ordinary knowledge there is never any question of all that fulness. What passes there for exact observation is, strictly speaking, really something superficial, and what we pronounce sufficient knowledge there is far from amounting to real completeness and exactness.

Now, ordinary consciousness, it is true, knows nothing of this fact. Yet it comes to light as soon as we go to work in earnest with the standard which this consciousness itself applies in every valuation of knowledge. But there is good reason for its knowing nothing of the fact we speak of. It is certain that we do not commonly occupy ourselves with things for the purpose of acquiring an ideal knowledge of them, but we desire to know about them because we must accommodate ourselves to them in our action, with the view of making them serviceable for our purposes. *It is from this point of view that ordinary knowledge originates and is developed.* It is quite natural, therefore, that from the first it includes *an element of arbitrariness,* and that a piece of knowledge suffices for us as soon as it simply expresses completely, exactly, and without error, that side of things that possesses interest for us, and falls to be considered in its bearing on our purposes, while all else is put aside as "collateral circumstances" or as "accidental." It does not appear in consciousness that that is an arbitrary limitation, because no disadvantages of any kind are connected with it that make themselves sensibly observed and could therefore compel attention. And men are doubly indisposed to feel the arbitrari-

ness, because, as if in consequence of a tacit agreement, at least in common life, the same thing is done by all people; while in general only that is felt to be arbitrary in which the individual deviates from the rule, not what is common to men and itself forms the rule.

Knowledge of what is individual, therefore, is not only the original and fundamental kind of knowledge, the basis on which the whole fabric of our knowledge is built; it is also the kind that answers to the ideal of knowledge, so far as there can be any thought of the ideal at all. But, on the other hand, it is certain that if we had only a knowledge of individual things and processes, and were obliged to acquire knowledge anew of every individual thing or process with which we came in contact, our knowledge would be limited in that case to an extraordinarily narrow compass. Indeed, if nothing else were allowed us, our present-day civilisation would not be to be found, and a race that existed under these conditions would not deserve the name of the human race at all. It is therefore of the very greatest significance that as a matter of fact we possess a species of knowledge composed of *General notions and judgments.*

In view of this fact, many a person might now perhaps consider it the first and most important point to ask what the possibility of this extension is based upon. But to that we can only answer that there is a similarity more or less marked between things and processes, which makes the formation of general notions and judgments possible and fruitful of results. For as to identity, no one who seeks to be exact will

venture to speak of that. Rarely, indeed, is even the same thing identical with itself to-day and to-morrow. If in daily life we speak without further qualification of identity, the above-mentioned element of arbitrariness is one of those coming there into play. Besides, it is quite clear that if we lost ourselves at this point in a far-reaching inquiry relating to the possibility touched upon, we would be exceeding the limits we have marked out for our study. For we do not wish to *explain* the *possibility* of experience or knowledge from any higher point of view, but only to realise to ourselves the *fact* of it, and want to know the nature of it. Though, for the rest, I do not wish in saying this to conceal the fact that I do not expect the slightest furtherance either of our knowledge or of our light from all those attempts at explanation, and that the numerous attempts of the kind that are made seem to me a sufficient warrant for such a judgment.

For our purpose it is much more important to direct attention to the following circumstance, which first comes within the range of our inquiry at this point, where we are dealing with the extension of particular knowledge to general propositions. I mean the circumstance *that all our knowledge is founded on the past and is of value for us in view of the future*, a fact that first of all places in the right light the significance possessed for us by general notions and judgments. We must dwell somewhat longer on the situation here presented, owing to its great importance.

Strictly speaking, we can always have knowledge only of the past. The future does not yet exist at

all. What we so designate is a product of our imaginative power, which borrows its colours from past experience. Of the future, and all that is future, there is no experience yet, and therefore also no knowledge in the proper sense of the word. Still, it is for the sake of the future, or from our interest in the continuation and development of our life, that we classify our past experiences and aspire to an exact knowledge, from which as certain conclusions as possible can be drawn. But in this connection, particular knowledge, that which remains particular in the strict sense, loses all significance; or at least, since it allows at most of a conclusion drawn from analogy, it passes entirely into the background behind that knowledge which affords material for a general judgment. True, it may be asked whether this assertion, which applies in the first instance to our knowledge of nature, can be made in the same way with regard to historical knowledge. The matter does, in fact, assume a somewhat different aspect in the latter sphere. Allusion must be made to this at a later stage. We can leave the point alone meanwhile, because here, too, something similar does really occur. Not only do *we as individuals* derive our knowledge of men and human things, ourselves included, likewise from past experience, and value it principally because it empowers us to regulate our future procedure: *the human race* as a whole also contemplates its past history not least to the end that it may make its arrangements for the future.

From what has been said, then, the question is not at all whether or not we wish to advance from

particular to general knowledge, or to form general notions and judgments. It is done prior to all deliberation and as it were instinctively; it is done by virtue of the same constraint in consequence of which we live, and with the view of living are anxious to accommodate ourselves to the conditions of our existence. The interest that coincides with life itself leads to this, the interest that rules unconsciously, if we go to the deepest motive, in all human affairs; while, on the other hand, the intellectual endowments we have come to possess empower us to accomplish the object. There is just as little need of beginning to ask whether general notions and judgments agree with reality. If that were not the case, roughly and in a general way, viz. so far as suffices for our practical purposes, no person would ever have thought of forming them. It is only the fruit of later subtlety and of idle fancy to exaggerate the agreement that is found here, so that doubt may afterwards be elicited as to whether there is any such agreement at all.

The most conclusive proof of the fact that we are thrown back on the practice of forming general notions and judgments, and that this has been done ever since there have been men, and the mental life of men, is found, further, in *Language*. As language is originally far from being an artificial product of deliberation or of conscious agreement, as it arose and was developed in the first stages of it in virtue of an inherent necessity involved in man's existence, the same is true as surely of the first steps in the advance of human knowledge which are treated of here. The

close connection between the two phenomena comes to light in the fact that language consists almost exclusively of words that indicate general notions and not any individual, particular things and processes. Only proper names form an exception to this, although it is only relatively to be so described.

Judgments, however, are what knowledge chiefly depends on. General notions are formed in order to make true general judgments possible. Just as little as the particular conception as such does the general notion contain simply by itself a portion of knowledge which I can accept for myself or communicate to others. Rather is that true only of the connection of two or more notions in a judgment. Therefore, too, the relation of notions in Logic, according as they are of superior or inferior generality, has, from the first, been reckoned their most important relation. For it is by it principally that the possibility of forming true general judgments is determined. Our assent will not, therefore, be accorded to the procedure of modern logicians, when they have maintained, on the contrary, that subsumption is only one relation of notions occurring among others, and that it cannot even pass for the most conspicuous one, since the relation of identity has greater claim to that rank. True, if Logic were concerned with exhibiting the different possible forms under which notions may be compared, and with laying down a suitable formula for full technical procedure with regard to them, the objection stated might be warranted. But as it is, it has to do with the great concern of truth, *i.e.* with the correct methods of forming and communicating true

judgments. Therefore this relation of notions in Logic is rightly preferred to all others.

Lastly, as to the extent to which the formation of general notions and judgments ought to go, or the limit up to which it can be continued, it would be lost labour to enter into the study of that. Care is taken that it is always continued, as far on the one hand as human experience reaches, and as far on the other hand as proves to be expedient for the concatenation of knowledge, and for the communication of truth. Here there are no arbitrary limits. Besides, he who pleases may pass over the limits which are determined in the way stated by the facts themselves. By so doing he may perhaps create some confusion for the moment; but in the further process of development, things must right themselves as a matter of course. Although in saying this I wish to point out the further fact that in regard to this matter, as in regard to all others, there are also natural errors possible, and often enough occurring. The correction of them must likewise be looked for from the extension of experience. There is no absolute protection at all against error; Logic is admitted to offer protection of relative value, by teaching people to follow correct methods.

If, therefore, we compare together particular knowledge and the knowledge formulated in general notions, and weigh the value of the two kinds, it is found that there are *two things* calling for attention. *On the one hand*, the latter is incomparably superior to the former in value and significance. We cannot form any idea of a condition of humanity in which it was limited absolutely to the knowledge of what is particular; so

that the value of general knowledge cannot be established by glancing at a time that was still entirely devoid of it. But we can safely assert that the extension of human knowledge and the progress of civilisation go on at about the same pace with the progressing generalisation of our judgments, so far as that generalisation is confirmed by the test of experience. Therefore, too, it is quite intelligible how mankind are proud of the conquests thence derived, how there are more or less lively feelings of value associated with progress in the latter sphere. The matter has, however, *another aspect* still, one which is frequently not observed, but which is just as undeniably true and just as certainly real. I allude to the fact that, as the result of this generalisation, knowledge is by no means carried onwards in all respects towards a fuller attainment of the above-mentioned ideal. In how far this is the case, and in how far it is not, is shown by a glance at the particular constituents of that ideal.

In the first place, as regards *freedom from error*, it is a well-known fact that there is hardly a more fruitful source of error than the too hasty generalisation to which mankind are naturally inclined. However, there stands over against that the fact that the general judgment is derived from a comparison of several particular cases and the combination of them, and that, therefore, while it is being formed there is frequently afforded the opportunity of correcting errors which, owing to hurried observation, attach to particular knowledge. And here, moreover, the gain decidedly preponderates. The defect referred to is

one occurring in the particular case from a subjective cause, and can be rectified by increased precaution; it is nothing but the inattention which enters as an element into all we do, and which takes the form mentioned in the generalisation of judgments; it is nothing, therefore, that attaches as respects the cause of it to general judgments as such. Or at least it is true only as regards the *communication* of general judgments that in these themselves there lies a cause leading to error, viz. in so far as they tell nothing about the *amount* of experience on which they rest.[1] But still we are willing to disregard that. The advantage at all events is of an objective nature, is given in and with the procedure itself. And therefore it can be said that by the generalisation of judgments we do approach the ideal of knowledge, in so far as freedom from error is an element of the ideal. On the other hand, as regards *completeness* and *exactness*, that is not the case. In these respects we always leave the ideal of knowledge farther behind us, the more general the judgments become to which we advance. And this, we may affirm, not because everything human must continue imperfect, but because such a drawback is furnished here in and with the procedure itself.

Many things, of course, seem to testify to the opposite of this, and doubtless as a rule corrupt man's judgment. There are two things above all that do so. It is undoubtedly easier to define a general notion completely, than to give an exhaustive description of an individual thing. It is no less true that we are

[1] Cf. R. Shute, *A Discourse on Truth*, London, 1878, p. 80 ff.

accustomed to express general judgments, with full confidence in their truth and exactness, whereas in the description of the particular thing there always comes to be a moment when we get to be uncertain, and can only pronounce probable judgments. But if so, does not general knowledge deserve preference before particular knowledge, even from the point of view of completeness and exactness?

In truth that is not the case. The general notion may no doubt be defined with comparative ease. But this only for the reason that it is always at the same time an *arbitrary creation of our mind*, which we can keep therefore more easily than things themselves within the limits of our mental power. In fact, there is no real thing answering to the general notion as such. What answer to it in reality are always only the numerous particular things or processes which we group together, owing to definite marks possessed by them in common, under a general notion. It is simply these marks to which the notion gives expression. The process followed in the formation of notions is not therefore wholly arbitrary. The similarity and dissimilarity of real things decide as to the connection and opposition of them in general notions. But yet the notion, however completely defined, is never the *complete* expression of a given reality, and therefore also it is not an element of such knowledge as deserves the name. It is a product of the knowing mind, formed *for the purpose of knowing* what is particular.

Something similar is true, too, of the application of notions in general judgments. An isolation of definite portions of the content of real things or processes, an

isolation, moreover, which is always *arbitrary* (in the sense mentioned), forms the ground of such application. Even the particular judgment gives expression only to *one* property of the thing or to *one* side of the process; and in so far, therefore, even it always rests on an isolation of the kind we speak of, with the effect, however, that the notion that comes to be applied in the predicate is somehow more closely defined. At least if the judgment is even approximately exact, that is what happens. But now in the general judgment even this closer definition falls away, or at all events appears to be only very uncertain. But the main point is that here the subject too is a general notion, which has also been formed on its part by the isolation of a portion of the content of real things and processes. The general judgment, therefore, never contains complete and exact knowledge, and cannot possibly contain it. It is not even knowledge in the strict sense, but, like general notions, a means for the purpose of knowing what is particular and real in the proper acceptation. As compared with what is real, it has always a *hypothetical* character adhering to it: if the marks *a*, *b*, and *c* (included in the notion of the Subject) are found combined in a thing, the mark *d* (the Predicate) is also to be expected. Exceptions must always, therefore, be allowed for in the case of most general judgments. If the exceptions occur only rarely, they do not overturn the general judgment. If it is found that they are more frequent than was supposed when the first combination was formed, the general judgment must be modified, if it does not entirely fall to the ground. Here there is always an element of arbitrariness coming

into play. The knowledge expressed in a general judgment is never therefore of an exact kind, and from the nature of the case it cannot be.

But all this can perhaps be stated still more shortly and simply. In this way, viz.: the completeness and exactness which we ought to strive for in general judgments, and which we can also attain, refer to *the relation of the Predicate to the Subject.* On the other hand, if we speak of completeness and exactness of knowledge in the sense of the ideal, we have in view *the relation of the judgment to what is real* and given in experience. But we get farther away from that the more general the judgment comes to be.

It is seen, however, with no difficulty why we so frequently, and indeed as a rule, overlook this peculiarity of the position. Even particular knowledge, as has been shown, contains an element of arbitrariness, which we are not aware of as such because it introduces no disturbance in our intercourse with things in practice, and because there is a tacit understanding among people on the subject. This arbitrariness is still more increased in the case of general knowledge, but for the same reasons we are as little aware of it as such in this instance as in the other. And of course I do not say this for the purpose of raising the slightest objection to it, or of finding fault in any way with the procedure. So it is and so it must be. The extension of knowledge requires it, or naturally brings it in its train. Only while that is so we ought always to be aware how the case stands with regard to our knowledge, how it includes such an element of arbitrariness, one which we are not aware of

in ordinary life, for the reason that we do not ordinarily wish to know for the sake of knowing, but for the sake of our practical purposes.

There is something else over and above this, which likewise causes the defects of general knowledge which have now been explained to be readily overlooked, and which must not be passed over without mention. It is not flattering to us men to be obliged to confess our powerlessness in presence of the immeasurable mass of facts and of their distinctions and modifications, and to say that we are not in a position to acquire a perfect knowledge of them. One prefers, therefore, to take flight as soon as possible to the sphere of *general notions*, where that sort of helplessness is less to be feared, seeing that in part we have always to do here with the creations of our own mind. It is just those like the philosophers, who have made it their vocation to cultivate the interests of the intellect in the special sense, that have always shown a great preference for general notions. Indeed, many have gone so far in this direction as to despise experience, because it acquaints us only with what is particular and accidental. Doubtless there are other factors of man's mental life besides intellectual aspiration which account for that way of speaking: of this we shall have to speak at length at a later stage. If we pass from that for the present, and compare the view that is brought to light in this procedure with what we have learned to be the nature of knowledge, we have to assert that a double error is involved in it. In the first place, it is not seen that the question is, as we insisted at the very first: What *can* I know? that in

this sphere we have always to do with *power*, and not with what we would like; that therefore one who allows his wishes to have a determinative influence here is following an *ignis fatuus*, and only deceives himself and others. And then, too, it is not observed (and the matter is closely connected with this first point) that there is really no other source of knowledge except experience—assuming that by knowledge there has to be understood not an independent art concerned with notions, one which teaches us how to speak of necessary truth and is itself like an unsubstantial house of cards, but as certain knowledge as possible of the real world by which we are surrounded. In opposition to any such depreciation of experience we have therefore simply to maintain that one who has gained a true apprehension of the idea of knowledge, and has learned to be exact with that idea, knows no other object aimed at by all that goes by the name of knowledge and science than that knowledge of *reality* which we draw from experience; and that to him the latter kind of knowledge, although the ideal of knowledge is scarcely ever realised by it, seems infinitely more valuable than a web of notions connected by the bond of necessity, in possession of which one thinks he can despise experience. However, as was stated, when we are judging of this question, there are other points of view besides which fall to be considered, and the significance of which it would not be right to undervalue. At least, for our part, we think that the need felt by the human mind for another kind of knowledge than the ordinary species is entirely warranted, and that it is rational to seek the satisfaction of it. Of that we have to speak

by and by. Here it simply required to be established at the outset that that satisfaction cannot be gained by means of ordinary knowledge, and in particular that general notions and judgments do not show us a way to derive such higher knowledge from the ordinary sort.

But perhaps all that has now been said about the ideal of knowledge and the realisation of it will become still clearer if we try to represent hypothetically to our minds what a *perfect realisation of ideal knowledge* would import. Unquestionably we can do so, since all clear knowledge possessed by man is bound up with language, only if we think of it as expressed in words. And further, in the case supposed, these words would have to be mere *proper names*, because only thus would knowledge really represent the peculiarities of all things and of every process. Certainly that is an absurd idea. If, in the Christian faith, we ascribe perfect knowledge to God the Lord, we mean by it nothing of that kind; we think of His knowledge as intuitive, and as completely pervading and embracing the universe and the smallest atom in it simultaneously; and we only ascribe it to Him, can only ascribe it to Him, because we acknowledge Him at the same time to be the Almighty Lord of the world. However, it is a choice remark after all which runs to the effect that the Divine thought is consummated *in nominibus propriis*. It makes the perfection of it intelligible to us, although by a paradoxical expression. It shows us at the same time how far we men for ever fall short of a perfect realisation of that ideal of knowledge which is contained in ordinary consciousness, in the fact of common knowledge. It instructs us in the truth that

while the whole strength and the whole value of our *human* knowledge rest on general notions, the limitation and inaccuracy of it also spring from the necessity under which we are placed of thinking and knowing by means of such notions.

Exactly the same thing appears if we take a somewhat closer view of the *content* of all our knowledge. It appears, viz., that the forms of our ordinary knowledge in which we gather up its content are determined by the consideration of practice, and therefore give evidence of the arbitrariness which is always connected with it. At the same time, a further defect in it will meet us here, a *natural illusion* inherent in it. One can know it for what it is, as an illusion, and make a deduction in consequence for the sake of truth, but cannot really get rid of it. And from this, perhaps, we get an explanation of the fact that there are philosophers who, instead of recognising it as an illusion, think they can derive from it the solution of the riddle of the universe.

There are two relations principally that form the content of our judgments and therefore of our knowledge. First, *the relation of a Thing to its Properties*, and then above all *the relation of Cause and Effect*. Not as if the content of our knowledge were limited to these. Sometimes it refers simply to the existence of a thing, but then mostly, of course, to its existence at a certain time or a certain place. In another instance it is the relation in order of time of two events in history, or the relation in space of two things belonging to the world of sense, that is the object of knowledge. Lastly, it may be the similarity or the dis-

similarity, as the case may be, of two things or processes which we represent to our minds—these words being taken here in the ordinary sense, not for what in daily life we call identity. But all this calls for no further special discussion, falling as it does in point of significance completely into the background behind those two relations first mentioned. We see this also from the fact that it is these relations which mainly form the content of our general judgments, and always when we are turning such judgments to account, even if they have another content as well, constitute the really fruitful element. But no wonder too that such is the case. The practical motive at the basis of ordinary knowledge gives them this significance. In order to exist and to be able to arrange my action to suit my purposes, I must first know what I have to expect of the things with which I come in contact. That is, I must know what properties things have. And for another thing I must know what signs of the future the present contains, or what means I must use in order to accomplish my purpose. That is, I must understand how to infer the effects from the causes and the causes from the effects. The motive, therefore, from which every acquisition of knowledge, and in particular the formation of general notions and judgments, originally results, naturally leads us to regard the Properties of things and the connection of phenomena[1] according to the Category of Cause and Effect as being of the first importance.

Furthermore, the two relations cannot always be kept

[1] This word is not used here and in what follows in Kant's sense, but as a notion under which things and processes may be comprised.

strictly apart. It is sometimes a matter of indifference whether I represent a thing to myself as the property of an object or as the effect of a cause. So too the corresponding general truth can be expressed in the one form or the other. I can say either that it is a property of water or an effect of it to make things wet, a property or an effect of the rose to spread perfume. But we must not for that reason suppose we may explain all the properties of things as effects of them. In order to succeed in that, we would often require to fall back on the principle of describing the properties of things as effects which they produce *on the knowing mind*. But if we did so, the standpoint of ordinary consciousness would be abandoned, the ground on which we take up the attitude of mere observers in relation to the things of the external world. And simply as the result of this observation, we speak sometimes of properties which things possess, sometimes of effects which they produce. If these relations sometimes pass over into each other, in other cases they fall distinctly asunder. I cannot describe it as an effect of a ball that it is round, or as a property of lightning that it has (in the given case) produced fire. Or at least, if it is possible by means of the copula "is" to transform every judgment asserting cause and effect into a judgment asserting a property, we as a rule make no use of such power, because the relations are materially different. Now, the difference consists in this, that properties disappear with the removal of the thing, whereas the effect continues even after the cause has ceased to be.[1] In both cases,

[1] Shute, *loc. cit.* p. 107.

therefore, we have the conjunction of definite marks or aggregates of marks, and find, according to experience, that they appear together. What is worth knowing in both cases is that if the one set exist, and where they exist, I can count on the other set. The difference consists in whether, on the one hand, I can assume the present existence of *b* if *a* exists and where *a* exists, or can, on the other hand, count on it for the future, or, to put it the other way, can presuppose where *b* is the past existence of *a*. In the former case we speak of Things having Properties, in the latter case of Causes producing Effects.

What we call a Thing or an Object has as a rule independent existence in Space, either really or at least in our idea of it; and so too the changes to which it is subjected in Time must not be too great. As a rule that is the case; we can speak here as little as we can elsewhere of an "always." Even the heap of leaves which is formed by the wind and scattered again while I am passing is a Thing, or the same may be said of the wave which rises out of the sea before my eyes to break again the next moment. How far we are to go in taking phenomena for Things and describing them as such in speech is determined solely by practical convenience. There must always be something which it is of importance for men to conceive by itself and to form and communicate a judgment upon. But as that is mostly true of things which have some sort of independent existence in Space and continuance in Time, it may be said that as a rule these characteristics belong to a Thing. To try to get a firmer hold of the matter, and to seek a more definite explanation

of what the essence of Things or (to use the superior expression) of Substance is, does not further our insight into truth. Philosophy, it is true, has always made that one of its tasks, and does so in part to this day. But the result of its endeavour is nothing but endless difficulties from which there is no way of escape—which is proof positive that a task of the kind ought not to be undertaken at all. Instead of that, we must keep before our view the element of arbitrariness which in pursuance of our practical purposes is really inherent in all our knowledge, and rest assured that it is this that decides as to the delimitation of the Things with which we have to do, and of which therefore we also desire to have knowledge. He who does this knows how matters really stand, instead of worrying himself with difficulties of his own making, and striking out arbitrary solutions of them.

There is one idea, however, frequently met with in modern dissertations on this problem, which we must not pass over, because it draws our attention to an aspect of the matter which has not yet been discussed. I mean the idea that it is the Unity of our consciousness on which the language used about Things as Unities is founded. That is in reality the case. Only the fact will be described more correctly if we say—We attribute our own nature, which we are conscious of as a Unity, to Things; and it is it that lies unnoticed in the background when we speak of Things as Unities. That such is the case will be denied by no one who realises to himself exactly what takes place. And no one will find it strange who has become clear

on the point that it is man's *original method of knowledge* to import his own being into all else, and in that way to make everything intelligible to himself. There is a survival of this method in the fact alluded to, and consequently a natural illusion of which we cannot get rid. That is to say, with the smallest personal reflection we can recognise the illusion as such, and except in poetical contemplation do not need to allow it any influence on our judgment, so that it loses in that way all significance for our knowledge. But we cannot prevent it still from dominating our consciousness and our speech about things as it used to do. Our mode of expression by means of language itself makes that inevitable. But then must it really be correct, instead of conceiving the fact here treated of in the way which has now been done, to seek in it an "explanation" of the Unity of Things? I should think—No. For it is not it that obliges us, even after more exact observation has proved everything to be in a state of flux, pertinaciously to distinguish things, and to gather up all our knowledge in judgments about things which are distinguished from each other and form Unities. It is rather the *practical purpose* of all knowledge that gives us no other choice. It would no longer be possible otherwise for knowledge to be realised and communicated in such a manner as to be serviceable for our purposes. That other idea is simply nothing but a natural and inevitable illusion.

So then let it be. In our knowledge we have to do with different Things or Objects. And what we know of them is that they have this or that set of Properties,

while others are wanting to them. But the question, What is the Thing and what are its Properties, or where does the former cease and where do the latter begin? need not make us rack our brains any further. It is true I would not like to say the Thing is simply equal to the sum of its Properties. As we distinguish between the two in daily life, it is really necessary to do so in order to be able to form and to communicate judgments of this sort. But as a rule the characteristics perceived by the eye, and therefore the impression received by sight, form the Thing itself; and what is apprehended by the other senses we call Properties. And this is not merely because it is the most general characteristic of Things to have a form in space, but principally because as a rule we perceive Things first with the eye. And as we have to interpret the first impression correctly, *i.e.* to complete it correctly in accordance with past experience, so that we may know what to think of it, and as it is from its bearing on this process that our knowledge of the Properties of Things has the significance it possesses, the Thing and its Properties are distinguished from each other mostly in the manner described.[1] But other points of view also come in to influence the result. We are obliged, *e.g.*, to designate Things by a general name. Now the peculiarity in respect to which the examples comprised under that name vary according to the finding of experience, even though it belongs, like size and colour, to the impression received by sight, we do not assign to the Thing itself, but regard as a Property of it. But that again becomes uncertain if the colour is

[1] Cf. R. Shute, *loc. cit.* p. 39 ff.

constant: does it belong, *e.g.*, to the nature of the raven to be black, or is it only a Property of it? Again, it may be the case that with certain things the perception of another sense is most closely associated with the word denoting the object, so that this perception is counted as belonging to the nature of the Thing. We have involuntarily the feeling that it belongs to the nature of sugar to be sweet and to the nature of iron to be heavy, that these are not mere Properties. The rule, however, remains that which was first mentioned, a fact too which is quite intelligible for the reason given. A canon which is unalterably fixed for the delimitation of a Thing and its Properties, cannot be set up at all. We should not trouble ourselves therefore about one, since it would be aimless and useless. For the difficulty that arises here from different people not always choosing the same points of view in particular cases, and therefore regarding certain marks as more or less essential, and then going on to subsume particular things under different conceptions, this difficulty, together with the risk of error that results from it, cannot really be got over by a technically correct definition.

Much more important for our knowledge than the Thing and its Properties is the second of the two relations mentioned above, that of *Cause and Effect*. It would be so simply because far more depends on it for the efficiency and certainty of our action. But it is so also because we have here the possibility of the double conclusion that the effect is to be expected if the cause occurs, and that the cause preceded where we find the effect.

It is only experience that warrants us to connect two phenomena with each other as cause and effect, and to pronounce a general judgment having this content. He who pronounces such a judgment without being supported directly or indirectly by experience, does what is foolish. He who does not base such procedure on repeated experiences and exact observation, acts exceedingly imprudently. Doubtless there are simple cases in the field of common experience in which a single instance suffices to make us recognise once for all a connection of the kind. This is illustrated by the maxim that a burnt child dreads the fire. But no further stress must be laid on that. It is only repeated experience, or further information as derived from the common experience of all, that teaches us even in such cases to distinguish truth from the error which is just as possible. The general rule is not destroyed, therefore, by such instances. And just as little is the other point disproved, that it is precisely this impulse to pronounce general conclusions forthwith (an impulse which is specially active, if the feelings of pleasure or aversion form the outstanding element of the experience in question) that is an exceedingly fruitful source of error. We flee from doubt because it paralyses decided action, because it makes us unsteady, and so puts us at a disadvantage. Most men are therefore inclined to found a general proposition on some few experiences more quickly than the facts permit, and so to cherish the illusion that they have certain knowledge free from doubt. In addition to this, we are often referred to the experience of others, and it is not seldom communicated or

accepted inaccurately. These are reasons enough to make it intelligible how in this most important concern of human knowledge errors so easily creep in. The only way to avoid them is by careful attention to what experience teaches. Of course, when we say this, it is not intended to be denied that, together with experience in the proper sense, we can use all the aids of human thought. But as it is experience that has shown us the first steps on every path of discovery, it is also experience alone by which we can assure ourselves whether newly acquired knowledge stands the test of all knowledge, whether in fact it deserves to be called knowledge.

But what, then, does experience teach regarding the connection of cause and effect? Before we answer the question we must try to settle the other question, what people in general understand by this connection. The way to do so is shown us by the full designation we apply to the cause which is properly so called, by its being spoken of as the *causa efficiens*, the *efficient* cause. A cause is what works, what has an effect; wherefore we connect it with that same effect as the cause of it, and conclude from its presence that the other will occur; and if we come upon this other, we infer from it that that has gone before which we have previously recognised as its cause.

But then what does "working" mean? The idea which we associate with it is derived from experience of our own human working and acting. Every day we have the experience that an act of will, an exertion and movement of the body, and, lastly, an alteration in the world around us, regularly appear in this order

in connection with each other. On this rests our idea of the efficient cause. In viewing things as *working*, we attribute more or less clearly and consciously this function, which is known to us from our own personal experience, to (animate or inanimate) Things. Thus our procedure is nothing but a remnant again of that original method of knowledge which is first suggested to man, and which has already been frequently alluded to. Certainly no one continues at the present day, after he has emerged from infancy, to see everywhere in the world beings equal to man, forming unities and complete in themselves, having a soul like him, working and guided by ideas of purpose. Or, at most, this habit is continued still on the part of some philosophers, who, by reproducing this infantile picture of the world in an exceedingly faded form, think—strangely enough—they have "explained" the world and solved the riddle of the universe. Ordinary consciousness knows nothing of this conception. But even this ordinary consciousness which is common to us all we shall not understand, unless we keep in mind that infantile method of explanation which is first suggested, and perceive that its most familiar ideas, like that of things as unities or that of efficient causes, are faint survivals of an infantile picture of the world which has long since vanished, that there is a natural illusion involved in it, which we can, it is true, recognise as such, but which we can never in our ordinary thought completely get over. Especially will we be unable without doing this to judge our knowledge rightly, or to define exactly its true nature.

We interrupt the discussion a moment, and give a

glance by way of comparison at the idea of *Purpose* or Final Cause. There is no question but man naturally presupposes and finds everywhere guiding purposes, as well as efficient causes. But then the fortunes of these two ideas have in some degree turned out differently. Man has soon been impressed with the observation that his own action with purpose is a consequence of his intelligence, and that in the other existences in the world this intelligence is not to be discovered at all as an active power, or at all events is found only in an *essentially* lower degree in the beasts. As applying to all else, to everything except conscious human action, the idea of purpose has therefore assumed a form corresponding to this observation: things move and develop not in conformity with purposes of their own, conceived by themselves, but in conformity with the purposes exhibited in them by the Creator; as the tools and constructions of men serve the purposes for which they invented and formed them. And lastly, at the present day men are inclined, at least large classes of them, to banish the idea of purpose from the investigation of nature altogether, and to confine it to the sphere of mental and historical life, to allow it in reference to nature only as an admissible point of view in the case of subjective (æsthetic or religious) contemplation, or at most beyond this as a heuristic principle of research. On the other hand, things still "act" as formerly, both animate and inanimate things, *concreta* and *abstracta*, although the original freshness of the idea is quite faded. Whence, we ask, this difference in the history of the two ideas?

The answer is simple and easy. The classification of phenomena under the Category of Purpose has no further significance for what has already been frequently described as the chief purpose of all knowledge. It does not help us in any way to master things, and to assert ourselves in the rush of constantly changing phenomena. The case is quite different, on the other hand, with the Category of Efficient Cause. What we can bring under it we place, in consequence, under the control of our purposes, so far as it is possible to do so at all. Hence the very different fortunes of the ideas which are originally so closely akin.

From this explanation it is plain, at the same time, that no objection can be made to the result. Certainly it shows incidentally what a naïve mistake it is to reject the teleological view as subjective and anthropomorphic, and to retain the causal view as that which properly represents the condition of things,—a naïve mistake, that is, so long as people continue to speak in all seriousness of causes as "operative." The truth is, the causal view, so long as it is conceived in that sense, is just as anthropomorphic as the teleological. It will therefore require to be dismissed in the same way as Rational Teleology (but here I must not omit to recall the fact that the teleology of the Christian conception of the world is of an entirely different kind) (I. p. 81). That is, it will have to be banished from the study of nature, and confined to the sphere of mental and historical life.

We return from this digression to our proper theme. We have seen the peculiarity of the common idea of

cause and effect. There remains the more important question what this relation signifies apart from that idea. Now, to that question there is, I think, no other correct answer except the following.[1] In calling a phenomenon a cause, we declare it to be a sign that another phenomenon, viz. the effect, is to be expected. And if we describe a phenomenon as an effect, that means conversely that it is a sign to us that another phenomenon, viz. the cause, preceded. Or, to put it differently, the fact that we conceive a phenomenon as a cause or an effect signifies that we represent it to ourselves as a sign of the one kind or the other. Now, if we do so without committing a glaring mistake, our procedure is always based on the experience that the two phenomena occur as a rule in connection with each other. Here too I say—as a rule. One who did not say that, but chose to speak of an "always," would be in error. He would have left the fact unnoticed that there are what we call, when we extend the causal view of things over a wider area, "counteracting causes." Where one of these is present, the cause has at all events not the usual effect. Consequently, it does not by any means have it always. But what leads to our arranging phenomena in this way is anything but caprice. It is nothing but the great interest which, if we go to the very bottom, disposes of all human things, viz. the endeavour to maintain our life and to realise our purposes. And when this is said, I think it has been fully stated what the connection of cause and effect signifies. He who would like to add anything else to the description will do well to see

[1] Cf. R. Shute, *loc. cit.* p. 105 ff.

carefully first whether it is not taken from the ordinary idea of an "operating" cause, *i.e.* from the natural anthropomorphic view of things.

Of course this description lies open to the objection that it completely accepts the vulgar and naïve prejudice, according to which *one* phenomenon is conceived as the cause of another. Long since, it may perhaps be objected, this prejudice has been overcome. It is instead the sum of all the conditions under which a phenomenon occurs that must be described as the cause of it. And here one who goes very thoroughly to work will require allusion to be made not only to the positive but also to the negative conditions. So, *e.g.*, Mill in his *Logic*. However, the latter may be left out of view. Mill himself sums up what would have to be said about the negative conditions in the sound remark that a tacit agreement prevails in regard to them.[1] In fact, there is enough remaining, keeping even to the sum of the positive conditions, to make such a notion of cause *utterly unserviceable* for common life. If people had built up their knowledge of cause and effect in accordance with this prescription, our race would certainly have disappeared long since from the face of the earth. For before we can settle whether the sum of the conditions under which a phenomenon occurs is really present, in many cases the phenomenon itself comes upon us, and finds us unprepared to defend ourselves against it or to make it of use to us. Thus the prejudice we are dealing with, which is often so energetically and cleverly combated, is not such a great evil. Our common daily

[1] *A System of Logic* (10th ed.), 1879, i. p. 383 ff.

knowledge of causes and effects is of value only if it is regulated by that prejudice. And here we are speaking of this knowledge alone in the first instance.

Others, like Wundt, recognise that the definition of cause as the *sum* of the conditions under which an effect occurs, makes the notion of no service for application, *i.e.* that it is false. Then on his part Wundt explains the cause to be "that condition which gives an account of the quantity and quality of the effect;" the other conditions are collateral conditions, the enumeration of which is left in the particular case to free choice.[1] And he repeatedly falls back on the principle that the *equivalence* of cause and effect, at least in the case of phenomena in space, must be determinative when we are fixing those conditions that have to be taken for the cause. But to this it has to be objected, that the application of this notion in daily life must be simply absurd. If, *e.g.*, one would assert in all seriousness that the cause of the child's falling out of the window and breaking its neck has to be sought in the circumstance that it first went up the stair, he would simply be laughed at. And yet in so doing he would be obeying Wundt's prescription, according to which bending out of the window would have to be reckoned among the collateral conditions. But the other point that Wundt likewise strongly insists on, viz. that the cause must always be conceived as a process and can never be conceived as a fact, belongs to the same category. The stone on the road was the cause of my fall in the dark. Or what else was it? Could it be the process by which the stone came to be there? That

[1] *Logik*, i. pp. 536, 537.

signifies nothing to me. If I point to that as the cause, I awaken the false idea that the particular mode of its arrival was connected with my fall. But if I take note that the stone was the cause, I can guard myself another time against a fall. Certainly, when we say this, it is by no means intended that it should be denied that in *scientific research*, which has existence extended in space as its object, it is very *convenient* to conceive the notion of cause as Wundt defines it. Only that must not be given as the general definition, with the result that the common notion of cause, which is the only convenient one for common knowledge, is disputed on the strength of it. Indeed, it is still a great question whether the latter is not the really original and legitimate notion of cause, whereas the scientific notion of it is nothing but an artificial modification of the natural notion, a modification which exists of right only when definite scientific problems are presupposed, and with a view to them.

We do not need to allow ourselves, therefore, to be misled by objections of this sort to the view of the notion of cause which was put forward above. It has, besides, the great advantage above all logical and scientific views, that all of us together (including the logicians themselves) are at one regarding it in daily life, and are guided by it in organising our knowledge for practical use. But this unanimity ceases as soon as we have to do with a higher and refined notion. This is plainly shown even by the two examples which have been taken in a manner at random from *Logic*.

But, it will be said, the connection of cause and

effect is something *objective*. The explanation above given sounded, however, as if we had to do with something subjective and arbitrary. It cannot possibly therefore be correct. And to beat us on our own ground, the objector will perhaps add that without doubt common consciousness regards the connection as an objective one.

Let us be clear about the point we are dealing with. We are not concerned with the question whether the two phenomena which we describe in the given case as cause and effect are objective occurrences or not. On the standpoint of common consciousness adopted by us, that is rather understood as a matter of course. The question is whether in addition to this the *connection of cause and effect*, the transition from the former to the latter, deserves to be called objective, or whether it is simply a subjective view of things and occurrences. Now, on this point common consciousness certainly takes the former side, and the unbiassed judgment of every person decides in the same sense. But if we come closer to the subject, and try to settle what this process itself, this connection, actually consists in, we find nothing except the "operating" cause: things operate as I operate when I throw a stone into the air. Yet that this is an anthropomorphism and nothing more, one can clearly realise even by a slight amount of reflection. What there is left over as the objective connection of cause and effect, is *the combination of the two phenomena in Time*, frequently also in Space. And further, this combination in particular cases is more or less close and direct. Where it is not a really direct connection we speak of remoter causes. And we

would do so much more frequently than we do, because it would serve our purposes better, if certainty did not decrease in proportion to remoteness, so that there would be much more scope left for intervening "counteracting" causes. We therefore put the view of causal connection in application in most cases only where a *direct* combination occurs. But what constitutes the essence of the cause is never anything except this, that it is a sign of the effect. The experience we have formed in the past makes us expect with more or less certainty that if the one phenomenon occurs the other will follow, or infer, as the case may be, that another has preceded. These are causes and effects. Our knowledge of them is got precisely in the situation in which all knowledge arises, is based on past experience, and acquired and preserved in view of the future. But phenomena are signs only where there is a person to whom they serve as such. Consequently we have of course to do with something that belongs to the mind. *We* bring this combination to the phenomena; it is not *they* that impose it on us. And we do so from the interest we have in mastering things, in dominating the world as far as possible and making it serviceable for our purposes. Impelled by this motive, the human race has in a surprising degree impregnated the varying phenomena presented, the play of things, with the idea of causality, and amid the whole has attained in this way a relatively certain existence.

But now, if this combination of two phenomena as cause and effect is, as we have said, something that we bring to things in our subjective contemplation of them, must it not in that case be at the same time a

matter of free choice? We could not absolutely deny this. There is always, for one thing, an element of free choice in it, just as in every regard that is always an accompaniment of our inevitably limited knowledge. To prove it in reference to the present question, I shall do nothing but recall the fact that the scientific investigation of nature operates with a notion of cause which, when applied in daily life, leads to absurdity. It follows plainly enough from this that among other things an element of free choice comes here into play. Or, again, if history shows us how many sorts of causal connection were formerly accepted, and also served the purpose of life tolerably well, but are at this day exploded and replaced by others which satisfy this purpose better, the same thing is shown there. Only, of course, it is anything but free choice absolutely that guides us. He who would so regard the matter and proceed accordingly, would very soon be instructed by experience, and that in the sharpest manner, as to his error. The very consideration to which this whole conception of things is due, fixes very definite limits to our free choice. And that is nothing but the necessity we are under of having to accommodate ourselves, in order that we may live, to the conditions of life which are independent of us. Only the *object* itself never presents anything except the combination of phenomena in Time, frequently also in Space.

However, we do not by any means combine all phenomena which regularly occur in succession and conjunction in time by the link of causality. Is it then really enough to fall back on that and that alone as the objective fact which is at the basis of the causal view?

That is the common objection to the theory which declares the derivation from the succession in time to be sufficient. And as often as the objection itself recurs, we have the example by which it is proved, the regular succession of day and night. Now, that very example at once shows better than any other how weak the grounds are on which the objection rests. Day and night are not simple phenomena, but each is an aggregate of phenomena. And it is one of the observations which must have been pressed on man at the very first, that the alternation between them is connected with the position of the sun in the heavens. Who would want to go farther and affirm that man could ever have been under the necessity of taking note of the presence of the day as a sign of the coming night, or conversely? What is of interest to note is, not that the day is followed by a night, and this again by a day, but *when*, *i.e. how soon*, it will be night or how soon it will be day. The sign showing this is the position of the sun in the heavens, or, in the other case, the heralds which announce that he is rising anew. But even to this day we consider the sunset as the cause of night and the sunrise as the cause of day, although as a rule we are raised by other means of an artificial kind above the necessity of being guided by these signs. However, it is not meant to be denied that the derivation of the causal view simply from regular succession in time, propounded in that bald form without explanation, seems not to be satisfactory. But in reality we have also taken other factors along with that to form the explanation. In the first place, there is to be considered the possibility of representing

the process according to the analogy of our own working, a circumstance which, as we can well understand, is of great moment in the common conception of cause and effect. Against that conception the assumption of remote effects which is made by science has worked its way with difficulty. Newton himself, the discoverer of the law of gravitation, did not, as is well known, venture in his day to lay down any such assumption, but by means of the hypothesis of an ether extended between the heavenly bodies established at the same time an indirect contact between them in space. But, above all, it must really be serviceable, *i.e.* suited for the chief purpose of knowledge, to apply the causal connection in the case of phenomena which occur in succession. Only if that is the case, if the antecedent phenomenon can really serve as a sign of the one that follows, is there occasion given to make use of that connection. But if we take these factors, which we have kept in view from the first as well as regular succession in time, in addition to the latter, the explanation of cause and effect might be held to be complete.

There is still one *refugium* left for the assumption of objective efficient causes. If we leave the external world and the natural anthropomorphic view of it altogether alone, the conclusion after all is that we know ourselves as efficient causes, and as efficient causes too in the strictest sense of the word. *The Will*, it might perhaps be concluded, is the only efficient cause which there is in truth. Even what takes place around us, it might further be inferred from this, is, notwithstanding the opposite appearance, if we

go to the very bottom, an effluence or effect of Will. Then this view again would be capable of various modifications. It might be formulated by saying that as the ground of the world which is open to our observation there is an Intelligible world of spiritual beings—and in saying that we would come nearest the infantile view of the world entertained by uncivilised man. But, not to speak here of Schopenhauer, we could also think of the omnipotent Will of God as that on which all that takes place and that acts in the world ultimately rests. Then in this form the view would approach that of the Christian faith. And one who adheres to the latter could not venture to speak slightingly of it taken by itself. We at least are of opinion that this is in all simplicity the truth, and affords the highest interpretation of the world that is attainable by mankind. Only, not although but just because we are convinced of this, we must decline to accept the argument in support of such faith propounded above. For certainly it is as threadbare as possible. In it one leaves the ground of sure knowledge and ventures on a leap into vacancy. For what is the reasoning at the basis of it, supposing it deserves that name at all? Simply and without circumlocution it is this. Because *a*, which I know exactly (mental and historical life), has some marks in common with *b*, which I know less exactly (nature), *b* I may be sure will also agree with *a* in other marks; and the thousand experiences which show me a thorough-going dissimilarity in respect to the latter must be an illusion. I should like to see the person who would risk his life on knowledge established in that way. But, as we formerly made out, that is the

decisive test of the question whether a person holds a piece of knowledge to be true, the content of it to be real. The view in question is in its first form an empty dream. In the form which Christian faith gives it, it is rested on entirely different ground from any reasoning of the kind. Mill is perfectly right in rejecting it wherever it is maintained on such grounds.[1]

But if the far-reaching conclusions which have been connected with it must thus be set aside, I would not by any means, like Mill, deny that there is any significance attaching to the observation itself that in the Will we are made acquainted with a true efficient cause. It points indisputably to a fact that cannot be doubted. What we understand by an efficient cause we have and know in our Will and in the Wills of our fellow-men, which are manifested in a similar way to our own. Indeed, we may assume that there is something similar embodied in different degrees in the rest of animal life as well. Only that again is of course of no great significance, seeing that we are so inaccurately informed about everything else in that life, and also because the difference between it and our life preponderates over the resemblance. But as regards human, or mental and historical life, we know it more exactly than we know anything else in the world, because it is our own life. Then, of course, Mill is right again when he denies that here we come upon any other source of our knowledge of cause and effect than our experience of the succession of phenomena in time. *What* I am able to accomplish, only this experience can teach me;

[1] *A System of Logic* (10th ed.), 1879, i. p. 409 ff.

and I shall execute all the more, the more carefully I attend to its lessons. Above all does the connection between the mental act of Will and bodily movement continue dark to me—a fact, indeed, that is generally recognised. As to this too, only experience can teach me in the particular case, in so far as the contemplated movement results or fails to appear. Nevertheless it remains a significant fact that in the sphere of mental and historical life I can speak of efficient causes (as well as of purposes and minds which form unities), without being obliged, in order to determine exactly the objective facts, to make any deduction from what I have said on the score of natural illusion. Here we can really recognise an internal connection between cause and effect. Or, to put it otherwise: here we gain a knowledge of the object which is traced back in the final issue to an immediate perception. And what we thus know we express in a manner conformable to the object known, if among the ways in which we conceive it there is included the mode employed when we speak of efficient causes.

In this way the facts themselves have at this point brought us again to the position that our *knowledge of man's mental and historical life* is somewhat differently circumstanced from our knowledge of nature as apprehended by sense. In both cases, it is true, experience is the only possible source of knowledge; and the Categories, too, by means of which we conceive fact and reflect it, are the same, or at least are closely akin to each other. Still there is found to be a difference which concerns knowledge

precisely as such. It consists simply in what we were just now speaking of. If we are dealing with man's mental and historical life, *there is not a natural illusion of consciousness when we import ourselves into the objects of knowledge.* Here that is rather the only correct procedure, what is absolutely required by the facts; seeing that in the mental and historical life of humanity we have to do with our own life. And now, if the value of knowledge as knowledge is determined in part by the consideration how far we really apprehend the objects of knowledge according to their intrinsic essence, it is clear that this knowledge must be held superior to that which we have of nature. On the other hand, of course, there are much greater difficulties to be overcome in this sphere than in connection with our knowledge of the natural world. Here we are referred for the most considerable part to tradition; whereas we observe nature itself, and can always at will test and correct our knowledge of it. Still the other circumstance is such a substantial advantage, that everything else must give way to it.

Then, too, this difference has corresponding to it *a difference in the interest we take in each instance in the object of knowledge.* It is implied in the nature of the case that our knowledge of nature answers its purpose better, the farther we can go in generalising notions and judgments, assuming that the certainty of them does not suffer in the process. In this sphere knowledge of a particular and solitary occurrence is frequently worthless, or, as we say, barren. But the case is different with the knowledge

which has history for its object. It is true this knowledge too has a practical interest attaching to it similar to that attaching to the knowledge of nature. Here, too, we endeavour to arrive at general theories about the life of associated humanity, so as to obtain guidance from them in the future; we endeavour, I say, to arrive at them—what we actually have of the kind is still very imperfect; and, considering the great complication of the phenomena, it is a question whether the results will ever resemble even approximately those of our knowledge of nature. But our interest in the phenomena of history is not exhausted with this knowledge, as we think we know enough of a thing or process in nature if we have brought it under a general formula. Rather does our interest here attach no less to the individual points of difference, which we put aside as subordinate in the case of natural objects, and take no further notice of. *In this sphere we operate with proper names*, such as have no place in the knowledge of nature. As, then, there is here a possibility of pushing our way to the internal essence of what is known, we have also in this case succeeded much more strictly in approximating to the ideal of all knowledge treated of above; although we have to be contented here too with a mere approximation. And for the present it may be enough to say this; we shall frequently return to this distinction.

We have reached the close of our second study. We began it by picturing to ourselves the ideal of knowledge as contained in common consciousness. We could not do so without being convinced at the same time that for mankind this ideal remains for

ever unattainable, that in our knowledge there is embodied from the first and inevitably an element of arbitrariness. Thereupon our attention was drawn to the fact that from particular knowledge we can mount up to a species of knowledge which finds expression in general notions and judgments. We recognised that on the latter species the position of the human race in the world depends, and that but for the possibility of acquiring it there would be neither human knowledge nor human life on the earth. At the same time, doubtless, we could not avoid making the admission that this generalisation of knowledge implies on the other hand a retrogression from the ideal of knowledge — not, it is true, as respects freedom from error, but certainly as respects completeness and exactness. After that we were brought face to face with the fact that in our common knowledge of Things and their Properties, and of Causes and their Effects, we import ourselves, alike inevitably and involuntarily, into the objects; that the world of which we have knowledge is always in part a product of our mind, a product formed by us owing to the necessity we are under of having to accommodate ourselves, in order that we may live, to the given conditions of life. Only with regard to historical life we have thus, although not an ideal knowledge, yet a knowledge of the object as it is, because it is our own life.

But with these latter propositions have we not overstepped the limits which we fixed for our inquiry? For it was intended that common knowledge only should be dealt with, what common consciousness

understands by knowledge. Instead of keeping to this, we have now asserted things that are quite foreign to common consciousness, things of which it knows nothing. However, we can appeal after all even in this matter to what is generally admitted. No one among us holds the world to be a conglomeration of animate beings with their effects and actions. Every one denies the truth of this picture of the world formed by uncivilised men; at most, children accept it to a certain extent. But then we must go on to deal seriously with the matter. Either the idea in question exists of right or it does not. It does not—we know that from a thousand experiences. This being so, then, it must be completely abandoned; we are entitled to take this course if we are seeking to come to an understanding about human knowledge. Our common knowledge of the world of sense is a *product of necessity*. A certain amount of arbitrariness is inherent in it from the first; a certain natural illusion throws its veil over it. But as far as is requisite it fulfils its purpose, that of making life in the world possible for us. And in this life of ours, as it expands into the life of our race in history, we have a new field of knowledge, one on which also, it is true, that knowledge continues to be very limited, but on which it can yet, at least relatively, be exempted from such arbitrariness and illusion as we have spoken of.

Hitherto we have been speaking of common knowledge. Distinct from it and concurrent with it we have that knowledge of the world which is the result

of scientific research. The question arises whether the latter is essentially in a different position from the former.

The general fact that there is a difference between the two things to be compared is clear. No doubt at this day, owing to the influence of science, the ordinary knowledge even of the common person has in many respects become different from what it was so recently as a hundred years ago. But that only proves that *in respect to their matter* no accurately fixed line of demarcation can be drawn between the two, although there are many things that permanently fall to the one side or the other. The difference continues to hold notwithstanding. For that portion of man's scientific knowledge of the world that passes over into common knowledge and consciousness is correspondingly altered. That is, it is adapted to the purposes of our life and action; especially is the relation of cause and effect settled in view of these. The fact, *e.g.*, that arsenic is poison, and that it may therefore occasion death if one takes it, is a matter of common knowledge. But the same fact assumes quite another appearance in connection with scientific theory. There it is said that arsenious acid and other metallic poisons form an insoluble compound with the substance of the animal body, and thereby check the process of life, and so occasion death.[1] In the one case we have common and in the other scientific knowledge of the same thing. No one will fail to observe that that is a difference in the *mode in which we know*. To this we have to add that the learned investigator himself adheres in many

[1] Cf. Mill, *loc. cit.* i. p. 472 ff.

respects in his daily life to the ground of common knowledge and consciousness. The world of the physiologist does not cease to be illuminated with colours and to reverberate with sounds, although he understands how to explain these phenomena as results of the interaction that takes place between the human senses and the 'objective' world. In short, there is undeniably a difference between common knowledge and science. The question is whether it is of a *specific* nature, or whether we have in the latter nothing in the last resort but an extension, characterized by the highest design and art, of the former and original kind.

To get a provisional answer to this question, let us give a glance once more at common knowledge, and observe that it is not a constant quantity, that it is rather subject to incessant and more or less extensive change. That is true of the knowledge of the individual. But it is also especially true of the knowledge of humanity, or of the nations which, like the Christian nations, *e.g.*, are connected by a common civilisation. The average knowledge of the individual is to-day, as was already mentioned, quite different from what it was a hundred years ago. But what is meant by this change, and what is the result of it taken as a whole, may be briefly described as the *Extension and Correction of knowledge*. What impels men to strive for this is the same necessity of which all knowledge is born. For in proportion as the conditions under which man has to maintain his life become more complicated, he requires to be intent on the improvement of his knowledge. The means at his disposal for this purpose

are more careful attention to his experiences, and especially the correction of one experience by another, as also the correction of his own experiences by those formed by his fellow-men. And lastly, the change itself consists in this, that awkward, unserviceable generalisations are set aside, and others which are more comprehensive are attained, that traditional combinations of cause and effect are dissolved, and new combinations, more exact and more suited for man's purposes, are put in their place.

Obviously, now, it occurs to us very readily to conceive scientific research as *the continuation of this process*. What takes place naturally at first from the pressure of circumstances becomes in science a matter of well-planned human endeavour, viz. the extension and correction of our knowledge as far as the powers of the human mind can reach. Indeed, as I think, it is this conception alone that represents the fact. It will therefore be my task to set it forth briefly under the different aspects that fall to be considered, and to prove the correctness of it. Then, in connection with it, there will have to follow at the close a glance by way of comparison and examination at the common conception.

The Extension and Correction of common knowledge is the purpose aimed at by Science. With the view of accomplishing this purpose, science itself must and can draw from no other source than that which common knowledge depends on; it is referred, like the latter, to experience, and indeed to experience alone; it must, like the latter, start with particular facts, *i.e.* with our knowledge of them, and build its whole structure upon

them. Its character as science is directly connected with this procedure. To seek any other foundation means to overstep the limits of science. Not as if a crude empiricism was meant to be advocated by what has been said, or as if arbitrary barriers were meant to be set up on any side whatever to check scientific investigation. I am rather of opinion that in such investigation every method is permissible that really leads us to extend or correct our knowledge. What is asserted is always only this, that in experience, in agreement with it, lies the only possible criterion of knowledge, and that all real knowledge must in the last resort be verified by this test. But that is also implied simply by the nature and notion of knowledge. Or by what else is it to be recognised that an affirmation bespeaks knowledge, *i.e.* agrees with reality, if not just by the fact that such is the case? In proportion, again, as this criterion cannot be applied, or at least cannot be directly and surely followed out, the strictly scientific character of a body of doctrine is compromised. If such investigation continues to be scientific, it is simply for the reason that it really aims at following out that criterion as far as ever the subject allows. It is precisely in those cases in which difficulties increase that acumen can be most brilliantly proved. But again an intellectual study the results of which from the nature of the subject—as is often the case in historical research—cannot pass for truths which are in the strict sense scientifically established, may have the very greatest value for us. Indeed, it is a question whether the highest truths and those best worth knowing are not altogether exempt from purely scientific demonstration.

But by all this the simple principle with which alone we are here concerned is not disproved. I mean the principle that for science proper there is no other source and no other foundation than what we have for common knowledge, viz. experience and the facts with which it brings us in contact.

That science is in fact nothing but a well-planned extension and correction of common knowledge, is most plainly shown if the attempt is made to carry out a distinction in principle between ordinary and scientific knowledge, supposing at the same time, as the facts oblige us to do, that experience is adhered to as the source of all our knowledge. Such an attempt is made by Wundt in his *Logic*.[1] He describes the constraining facts as being the criteria of *ordinary* certainty, and then further the agreement of the perceptions of the individual, and also the agreement of those of the different perceiving minds. He holds that in common life we have perfectly enough with these. *Scientific* certainty, however, is said to be reached only when there is added as a further criterion that what is perceived has not its source in the perceiving mind. But how can that be established? According to Wundt's own avowal, only by that continued control of the various perceptions by each other which science itself in part brings about by artificial means. Or, in other words, the difference at first so strongly insisted on between ordinary and scientific certainty is then immediately given up again, *must* be given up, because the actual procedure of scientific investigation to which Wundt appeals, proves it to be imaginary. The

[1] P. 378 ff.

difference that really exists is, even according to Wundt, no other in the last resort than that mentioned above, viz. that scientific knowledge, in contradistinction to ordinary knowledge, is a product of art and studied workmanship.

To the same issue the difference is also to be traced up which exists in respect to their aims and functions between common intellectual acquisitions and scientific research. Both are *essentially* the same. What is striven for in both cases is knowledge in the sense already sufficiently explained. And in the one case as in the other the functions consist in the connection of cause and effect on the one hand, and in the generalisation of judgments on the other. Only science reckons with quite different factors from those forming common knowledge. What passes in the latter for a simple object is as a rule, when looked at from the scientific point of view, an infinitely complicated phenomenon, or else a merely partial phenomenon which forms with others like it a more comprehensive fact. With regard to every organic body, *e.g.*, the former statement applies; and with regard to the position which the earth and sun assume in relation to each other at a given moment, the latter assertion can be made. In the one direction science goes infinitely beyond common knowledge in the analysis of phenomena, in the other it thinks of a connection and composition that are quite remote from the naïve consciousness. Then again it sets the attempt to generalise above both functions, and there floats before it, as the ultimate ideal aim, the achievement of bringing all processes, the whole mechanism of the world, under the sway of *one* formula or of *one* law,

i.e. of bringing out a final, a highest, an all-comprehensive generalisation. Now there certainly seems to be a great difference between the results of science which are so procured and our common knowledge. Looked at more closely, however, it is always simply the difference which there is between *a product of necessity and a creation of well-designed study and art.*

Perhaps no one will have much more to object to all this. At the present day, every one really ascribes to experience conclusive significance for knowledge. And doubtless the connection affirmed here between common knowledge and science is not mentioned frequently, only for the reason that it seems too self-evident to call for special notice. But now what further follows from the estimate of science declared above to be correct, could hardly in the same way pass unchallenged.

In the first place, this inference that science, like common knowledge, is subordinated here to the chief *practical* purpose of life, could not fail to call forth opposition. That seems not to be in keeping with its dignity; indeed, it seems that science is not compatible with that view at all. Or if one is asking about *truth*, must it not also be one's *purpose* to find the truth, the truth without any regard for collateral purposes, even though these bear upon our own existence? Is it not in itself a contradiction to degrade the search for truth, in which surely the soul of science consists, by making it in any way merely the means for life? Who is not aware of the lamentable ravages caused again and again in science by that sort of procedure? What is more

objectionable than a pretended science which is corrupted and warped by practical interests?

And yet, however warranted such considerations not merely seem to be, but really are, they come to nothing after all as regards the main point. That is, they prove nothing contrary to the assertion that science, like common knowledge, is always in the final issue subordinated to man's practical purpose. Those objections are directed in reality not against the proposition itself, but against an over-hasty and false application of it, one which no person could seriously maintain. They are directed against an application, viz., which regards the individual investigator, and then, too, his investigation in the particular case, as dependent on practical purposes, and which conceives, besides, the practical purpose described as being always set above science, in a contemptible and low sense.

It would unquestionably be a *moral* wrong if the individual allowed himself to be guided not by the facts but by his interests. But we have really nothing to do with that at all. The practical purpose which has to be considered is that of humanity, whose affair science, in contradistinction to the common knowledge of individuals, must be considered to be.

It is no less true that science would suffer most keenly, and lose its ideal impulse, if it wanted to work only from a regard for the definitely circumscribed practical advantage which its results were expected to yield. *In actual scientific work*, this point of view must of course always and most decidedly rank as secondary. This must be the case even for the simple

reason that the practical advantage of its results would otherwise become altogether questionable itself. The discoveries which are *most fruitful of results* when turned to account in practice, are most of them at first made by accident, and are not purposely aimed at. It is obvious, too, that there could no longer be any question of *undreamt of* and really new discoveries, if all that was done was to be prosecuted under the paramount rule of such ideas of what is practically useful as are *already familiar*. Even for its own sake, therefore, the practical purpose must not on any account be put in the foreground. Still more important is the other circumstance, that here as elsewhere the means as contrasted with the end in view obtain an *independent moral* significance. We started with the fact that in science the acquisition of knowledge comes to be a matter of well-planned studied effort. Now it is undoubtedly implied in that very fact that science contains its purpose in itself, viz. the extension and correction of knowledge, and comes to be independent of the remoter or chief purpose.

In this latter respect science is on a par with moral action, as to which it is equally true that the *chief purpose* cannot or ought not to serve at the same time as the *motive*. Here I assume that this chief purpose of all morality is the general well-being of humanity. An objective study which seeks to make the origin and development of moral life intelligible is led, I think, without demur to that conclusion, one which is furnished by the facts themselves. But then it does not by any means follow from this that the moral person requires to have his action in any particular case

determined by an idea of the general well-being of all. What we ought to do we are told by the moral law as it is present to us with its commandments in conscience. We must not conceive these commandments as a body of technical rules for the realisation of the purpose we have spoken of. They have an *independent* significance; and in respect to it they will not endure to be degraded in any way, and to be put under restriction. Nevertheless the above-mentioned purpose *is* the chief end. And the two things are quite compatible with each other. We only require to keep in mind that the standpoint adopted in the scientific explanation of these phenomena and that of moral action itself must not be confused, that we cannot or must not without hesitation conclude from the one with respect to the other. From the fact that that is not attended to, there springs further that misleading use of the word "Eudæmonism" which includes in the conception the above-mentioned doctrine of the chief purpose of morality, although a doctrine founded on happiness exists only where the *endeavour to reach happiness* is explained in some way as being the *motive* of moral action. Now a similar distinction must also be made as regards science. The proposition laid down regarding the chief practical purpose of it has the significance of a piece of objective knowledge which has absolutely nothing to do with the standpoint and procedure of the scientific person. Looked at from that standpoint, science has its purpose in itself, and in pursuing it—in searching for truth—must not be cramped or contracted by any practical consideration, be it what it may. The objection that the recognition of a supreme practical

purpose as the end of science endangers or destroys its ideal character, rests on the same confusion, and is therefore just as foolish, as the other objection which decries the estimate of the moral life which has just been mentioned as Eudæmonism.

But the analogy reaches still further. I stated already that the aversion felt for the position adopted as to the chief practical purpose of science rests further principally on a false and unworthily conceived idea of that practical purpose. People think here of sensuous enjoyment, or of what is practically useful in the common sense of the word. But here too, it is rather the truth *that the purpose is conditioned as to its nature by the means.* Here too, I say—*i.e.* as in the other case of moral action. The moral norms are not a mere means for realising the purpose of such general well-being as might itself be independent of morality. This general well-being has rather to be recognised as being of such a kind that it can be attained, appreciated, and enjoyed only in and with the moral growth of the individual. It is not weal according to the idea of the morally undisciplined man, but in the sense of him who has been powerfully affected by what is morally good and is now devoted to it as the *interest of his life.* So also here. This practical purpose of science is above everything our *intellectual mastery over things*, a mastery towards which we must by some means advance, in order to become and to continue to be intellectual persons. It relates to the *position of the human race in the world*, that position which empowers it to rise above the world and to look beyond it to an *eternal purpose.* There is not, therefore, the slightest prejudice

to science or to its dignity implied by the fact that it is estimated as a means for this end.

After all, these considerations hardly go farther than to remove certain misgivings awakened by the subordination of science to a supreme practical purpose, misgivings which arise from well-grounded feelings of value. They show that a high idea of the nature and value of science is by no means incompatible with such a view. But a *proof* for the correctness of what has been said is by no means furnished by them. For it is not meant that among its various characteristics science has that significance for the practical life of humanity which has been stated, a fact that no one will deny, since it is plain to the view of every person. It is rather meant that the *last* and *highest* purpose of science ought indeed to be recognised in the end alluded to. And in this belief there is also implied the other conviction that our scientific knowledge of the world never assists us to reach a solution of the riddle of the universe, that with all the relative perfection it can reach, in presence of *this problem* it inevitably proves ineffectual. It is an indispensable and relatively perfect instrument for the exercise of the intellectual supremacy over the world to which we are destined, but it is not the path to the highest knowledge, to the discovery of an answer to the question of the chief Cause and the final Purpose of the world, which it is so often held to be. The question is therefore whether this can be asserted of right, whether it is in keeping with the real significance of science so to estimate it.

We have already found that our common knowledge inevitably includes an element of *arbitrariness*, and

that as it takes form in our consciousness it always involves a natural *illusion*. We then affirmed further that science consists in the designed completion of this common knowledge. The question just raised therefore takes first of all the form, whether this arbitrariness is got over in science, and whether this illusion vanishes in it, or whether both continue here in altered form as before. If we suppose the latter question would have to be answered in the affirmative, that would certainly be a strong proof of the assertion that the subordination of science to the chief practical purpose of man, that kind of subordination from which, in the case of common knowledge, its arbitrariness results, is quite right; that science is not the way to get an answer to the highest and ultimate questions. In the other case, it would always, it is true, remain a question whether the chief Cause and the final Purpose could be discovered by following this path. Still our confidence that it is possible would in that case be considerably increased. Now our opinion is to the effect that only the first-named view is correct. The limits of common knowledge spoken of exist as well in another form in science and for it. The difference is here again only that which has often been mentioned: in place of what naturally arises there comes what is produced by careful design.

There is often a distinction made between the naïve presentation of the world accepted by common consciousness and the scientific presentation. The former is, as it were, the surface of the latter as it appears to man in daily experience. However, the former does not completely coincide with what we have called

common knowledge. We can conceive common knowledge as enlarged and completed by science without the limits of the naïve picture of the world being overstepped. The results of Astronomy, *e.g.*, obtain a place even in the naïve conception. For although the picture of the universe drawn by that science runs out to an unlimited extent and so into indefiniteness, though therefore it can hardly continue to be described as a plain picture, yet what is thus formed is nothing but an extension and correction of the naïve presentation of things. The distinctive features of the so-called scientific presentation of the world are found not in that function of science which reaches out to what is great, which connects things and looks at them in combination, but in its analysing function, that which takes us down to what is particular and minute. For it is in virtue of the latter function that science reckons ultimately only with such factors as are remote from common consciousness, and that much of what cannot possibly be omitted from the presentation of the world accepted in common experience is eliminated as "subjective."

If now we think for a moment of the so-called *scientific picture of the world* in its ideal completion, we find it shows us what seems an endless number of oscillating and rotating simple substances, the movements of which take place according to perfectly well-known laws, which laws again as a whole are nothing but manifold variations of a simple fundamental law. Of course there is very much wanting to make the affiliation of the actual world upon an atom-world of this sort moving according to law even approximately demonstrable. It may be positively

asserted that it can never be completely demonstrated, as there must always be a limit set to it in *conscious life*. Here, however, that fact does not matter. The ideal maintains nevertheless its great significance. We must think of science, so far as it bears on nature, as being in the position of approximating without limit to this ideal. And the scientific picture of the world which is actually realised at a given moment, lies somewhere between the world of common consciousness and this scientific ideal. The question is whether in this scientific picture of the world arbitrariness and illusion have vanished, or whether they have only assumed a different form from what they have in common consciousness.

The arbitrariness of common knowledge consists in the first place in this, that we attend only to that feature of things which is of interest to us in our intercourse with them. That knowledge is never therefore complete, and is only in the rarest instances approximately exact. This is the case even with regard to our knowledge of what is individual, which is the original and fundamental kind of knowledge. Above all is this the nature of that knowledge which finds expression in general notions and judgments: here arbitrariness becomes quite an inevitable accompaniment. Now science is always composed of *general* judgments. The particular fact purely as such has no interest for it, and does not appear in it at all. It is only when the fact has been freed from isolation and brought under a general rule, or has led to the discovery of such a rule, that it is scientifically accepted and mastered. Otherwise it stands over as a

problem, for the solution of which means will perhaps be found by and by. Science has always to do with what is general, and with that alone. It therefore necessarily declines to seek an exact knowledge of what is individual, as it concerns itself only with the elements which things and processes possess in common; and in that way it inevitably shares in the arbitrariness involved in general notions and judgments.

The very same thing is true with regard to the other consequence which results, as we saw, in the case of such notions and judgments. I refer to the fact that we have to do both in the subject and in the predicate of the judgments with *parts of the content* of things, isolating these parts from what experience shows us. Indeed, in science this arbitrariness assumes, we might almost say, a refined form. For what we assert about things in common life is something that really exists or takes place, though it may not be accurately described, and may still less be the whole that there would be to say about the things. In science the case is often enough different. The simple elements of which it speaks often exist nowhere by themselves—or else they so exist only in the retorts of science. Apart from this they are found only in combination with other elements, and that combination may be of an exceedingly complex nature. Often the same is true of what science asserts about them. It comes to pass nowhere except under the hands of the scientific experimenter. Apart from this the process is found only as *one* factor co-operating with many, which form together a complicated product, one which is by itself again a specific whole. We have been

accustomed to regard these simple elements and processes as really existing and taking place. We say in reference to real things and occurrences that they are composed of them. And there is no objection whatever to that. Only we require to be aware of the arbitrariness prevailing there, the arbitrariness resulting from that supreme purpose of all knowledge and all science which is implied by our endeavour to make ourselves masters of things. If we will describe the position of matters correctly, we must say that the "compound" thing is what is real and the "complicated" process what occurs in truth. The scientific analysis of each of them is *a construction submitted by us*, which enables us to register the manifold possible relations of the thing or process, and opens the way to new generalisations. It is of course a step in advance if constructions of this sort, consisting of analysis and composition, prove successful. It is not, however, an advance in the sense of being an approximation to ideal knowledge such as is exempt from arbitrariness, but an advance in that human knowledge which serves its often-mentioned practical purpose, and in which, just because of that purpose, arbitrariness is innate.

For the delimitation of things in common experience practical necessity is our guide. Every phenomenon is a Thing, and is put down as such in speech, as to which it is of importance for men, whose lives depend on their intercourse with these things, to form and communicate a judgment. The things and objects of scientific experience and scientific knowledge lie somewhere in the middle between the things of common experience and the

simple substances or atoms which are the constitutive elements of the scientific picture of the world. But wherever they lie there, the delimitation of them continues to be arbitrary; only it is not the exigency created by ordinary intercourse with things, but the exigency of the scientific construction, that guides us in the case, the consideration how far it does or does not help that construction to fix them down, to form and communicate judgments about them. Only when the process has got as far as the simple substances or atoms themselves, does the delimitation cease to be arbitrary and become necessary. For then the very terminus of all analysis and delimitation is reached; here the notion implies that no further step is possible. Wherefore, too, the philosopher, if he gets into difficulties with his notion of Substance, takes flight to a certainty to these atoms. But these simple substances have this characteristic merely because they are nothing but *creations of thought*, elements of a very technical study which the human mind in its endeavour to master things bestows upon the latter. The position is not, therefore, that we get here to a reality which answers at last to certain logical postulates, and has therefore to be taken for *strict* reality. The position is rather this, that here scientific study runs out unmistakeably into an ideal construction which is a means for the purpose of the human mind. In this way, too, what precedes and is directed to the same end is put in the proper light. Here it is plainly proved that we have a construction in the sense explained above. An approximation to an ideal knowledge exempt from arbitrariness it is not.

The notion of cause and effect that prevails in common life is this, that the cause is a sign to indicate the following effect, and conversely: regular succession in time, some analogy between the process and human action, and the expediency of conceiving the two processes as signs of each other—these are the elements of the notion. As science connects itself with common knowledge, even it begins with this natural notion of cause and effect. But here its technical work already commences. Let us assume that it is sufficient for common experience to connect A and B as cause and effect, but that science discovers beyond the range of common experience cases in which A occurs without B following. If, now, it can be demonstrated that in all cases in which B follows A, the latter has the mark a which does not otherwise appear, we conclude—a is the cause of B. Now of course it is possible that isolated cases will subsequently be discovered in which, notwithstanding the mark a (in A), B fails to appear. If they are really isolated, the connection stated is finally accepted: we then seek to establish a common mark α in these exceptional cases, and explain this α as the cause which acts counter to a. But the web of causation is or becomes much more complicated still. We seek the cause of P. Experience tells us of A as such cause, but also of B, C, and D, although these four have not a mark possessed by them in common and not recurring elsewhere. In that case we have to fall back in common life on the necessity of noting each of the particular instances by itself, a course which has no further inconvenience of a serious kind, so long as

there are really, as we have just assumed, only four cases that fall to be considered. But science cannot stop there. It seeks the cause of P, and it is mostly in the position of knowing, or being able to find, along with the cases first presented, others in which P follows E, F, G, H, etc. By supposition the antecedent phenomena in all these cases have no common mark, and the simplest way to find the cause of P is therefore closed. But now it can be shown that into each of the phenomena A, B, C, D, etc., there enters a factor, that in the respective instances there is another element, A^2, B^2 C^2, D^2, etc., which factors have the common mark *b* otherwise not to be found: in that case science declares *b* to be the cause of P. Here too, the same possibility exists that phenomena will subsequently be discovered in which *b* exists without their being concerned in another phenomenon which is followed by P. Here too, the most direct means of solution is to find out for these cases a counteracting cause β. But of course here and in general this means of solution admits only of limited application. If, *e.g.*, new cases are discovered again in which *b* exists without there being an indirect relation to P, but in which, too, the counteracting cause β that was first established is wanting; and if it is also impossible to prove another counteracting cause embracing both series, it remains, of course, open to seek a second counteracting cause for this second series of cases. But then the web soon becomes so complicated and so far withdrawn from inspection, that the only thing remaining at last is to give up the connection of *b* and P, and to seek new ways of finding the cause of P,

ways which, of course, will always be of the same sort.[1] But the real question with which we are occupied, viz. whether in the scientific discussion of cause and effect arbitrariness has vanished, scarcely requires a special answer after what has been said. Here too, the truth is that arbitrariness certainly comes in, of course not to an unlimited extent, being bounded rather by experience and the facts it furnishes; still it is arbitrariness in the proper sense of the word. The whole that is shown us by science is an intricate web of causes and effects which are *devised by art*. The aim of the construction is to give the scientific picture of the world with its simple substances, the total action of which, in all their modifications, can be brought under great laws which form unities. The progress of science is not to be sought in an approximation to ideal knowledge. It lies in that increase of our intellectual mastery over the world which we gain by means of it.

It is well known what importance is possessed in science by *Experiment*. That *one* careful experiment outweighs a large number of experiences that are natural (not like experiment artificially produced) has

[1] Cf. the able discussion by Shute, *loc. cit.* p. 164 ff. Mill's doctrine of Induction, too, comes essentially to the same thing, viz. as respects the procedure which is prescribed by it, and which is learned from actual scientific work. On the other hand, the doctrine adopted above makes no use of Mill's principle which he calls the *uniformity of the course of nature*. But in fact that principle does not represent the standpoint otherwise adopted by Mill, and is rightly condemned as inconsistent with his doctrine. From the *empirical* standpoint we can only speak of an expectation, justified by the results of science hitherto obtained, that the combinations of cause and effect once established with scientific care will also be proved by future experience; and we can only affirm that, *as a rule*, this expectation is not falsified. Nothing else is supplied by the facts, and anything more is really quite superfluous.

often and justly been affirmed. The description of scientific method just attempted also does full justice to this circumstance. It is just experiment that does what is best in the case, since it is the principal means possessed by science for finding "causes." I mention this only to meet the objection that after all there is a way shown, viz. by experiment, for getting rid of arbitrariness. For what seems clearer at first sight than that all arbitrariness is banished, if science bases a proposition on a well-chosen and carefully executed experiment? But against that it has to be maintained that experiment itself is an arbitrary interference with nature, and it has to be pointed out that in nature itself the cases are never found in the simple form in which experiment exhibits them by artificial isolation. For this reason, too, it has already been said above, that there is many a thing that never and nowhere exists or occurs except in scientific experiment. Science, therefore, has certainly every reason to ascribe the highest value to this means of accomplishing her work. But it cannot serve to prove the elimination of arbitrariness from science, since it rather marks in a very special way the form which arbitrariness assumes there.

Accordingly, in summing up, we must conclude that in science we meet with the same arbitrariness which we first became acquainted with in ordinary knowledge, but which is not felt, even in science, to be arbitrariness, because it does not rest on subjective fancies of the individual, but is forced upon all by the problem and its purpose (I. p. 383). The difference between science and common knowledge is in this

regard too, no other than that which has often been mentioned: in the one case we have a product of necessity, in the other a work of study and art.

But perhaps it will now be clearer even than before what is meant when we assert that science serves a supreme practical purpose, and remains subordinate to it. That purpose is not something that exists distinct from and side by side with scientific research, and is now connected or bound up with it only by the human will. Rather is it inherent in our human mode of knowing, a natural and universal accompaniment of it, of which it cannot possibly get rid. Long before men thought of prosecuting science in the modern sense, there was that and no other kind of knowledge, the kind which is determined by man's natural position in the world. And in this path, which is not arbitrarily chosen by man, but marked out for him, science itself advances farther, moves in a forward direction. By so acting we do what the facts prescribe, what no one does or can do differently from another. Therefore, too, there is nothing implied in this that compromises the dignity of science, or introduces into it the shadow of another motive than the one and only legitimate motive, that of seeking the truth according to the best of one's powers. Neither the motive nor the method of science is affected by this judgment. Only its results are differently estimated; for it is held that even they do not assist us to arrive at ideal knowledge.

There remains the other question, whether *the natural illusion* which is involved in common knowledge is got over in science. The answer to that is

simple and easy. To arrive at it, let us look at the scientific picture of the world which has often been mentioned.

In place of Things with their Properties there have come the atoms devoid of properties, or the monads, centres of force, or whatever one may call them. What connects them with one another is still, as formerly, action according to the Law of Causation. Now it is plain that the natural illusion of common knowledge is not got over by this transition. For even these shadowy essences are something in our thought only through our importing into them the unity of our consciousness. And the "action" of them, or the law of the efficient cause, has precisely the same significance as the action of things according to common thought. We transfer to them what in truth is known to us only in and from ourselves. Thus from this point of view also it is found that this scientific picture of the world is an ideal construction of the human mind, furnishing an endless problem which it aims at solving in the interest of its intellectual supremacy over the world, and which it is relatively capable of solving; it is not some sort of hidden reality lying behind the things of experience, in knowing which we would be privileged to apprehend an unconditioned truth.

It is a fact of more importance that the natural illusion involved in our knowledge is increased in science by an important addition. Here I think of the notion of a *law of nature*. That notion is not confined, doubtless, to science, but—among us at least—has become an element of common speech. But that has to be ex-

plained by the influence exercised by science on common knowledge. Its proper home is science. Owing to its great importance, let us dwell somewhat longer on this notion.

In the first place, it is clear that it takes its rise precisely in that situation in which, as we previously saw, all knowledge originates. It gathers up past experience so far as it is of significance for the future. For what we call a law of nature is never anything but an expression for a more or less extensive amount of past experience and of scientific inquiry which has been concentrated upon it. And further, it is an expression the point of which is just the expectation conjoined with it, that we could reckon on the same thing for the future. This, and nothing else, is the peculiarity of *all* laws of the kind. The distinction which is drawn between an "empirical law" and a "law of nature" has only a subordinate significance. It signifies a *difference in degree* in the trustworthiness of the proof of such law, and accordingly in the confidence that marks the expectation associated with it for the future. On the other hand, it does not by any means signify that the law of nature is not founded, like the other, solely upon *experience,* and exhibited in it. What we call an empirical law is based on a series of observations, and on a generalisation which gathers them up. If we are able thereafter to confirm such law by a trustworthy experiment (*i.e.* by artificial *experience*), or else to deduce it from other laws previously established (*i.e.* from a garnered store of *experiences* and scientific arts), then it advances to the dignity of a law of nature. The latter therefore never ceases to

be an *empirical* law in the proximate sense of the word.

But now we find here again that the common and native idea of a law of nature turns it into something quite different from what it is in truth. Here again that idea is derived from human circumstances, and from historical experience. What we originally understand by a "law" is a rule that holds good in human society, a norm to which the human will subjects itself. If we speak of laws of nature, we transfer this idea from human circumstances to nature, as if there were rules and norms there too, exalted over all that happens, as the civil law is exalted over the citizens, and which govern the course of nature as the public laws govern the movements of human society. But then the case is just the same here as with the Things which are held to be Unities, and the Efficient Causes of our common thought. It is a part, and that too a most important part, of the natural illusion which is involved in our knowledge. That illusion, therefore, far from ceasing to exist in science, is increased in it by a figure of such moment. In popular thought, into which the figure has pushed its way from science, it gains a *mythological* character; and here it threatens to grow out into a Pantheon of natural divinities, over which again Fate is enthroned as the supreme divinity.

Of course scientific research itself knows nothing of natural law as a mythical creation of this sort. It is not as powers holding sway *over* things and all that happens that laws of nature are conceived in it. But *in* things and *in* every real occurrence they are said to hold sway, eternally and unchangeably, with iron necessity.

However, that is nothing but a confused idea with which no one can rest satisfied who goes thoroughly into such questions. *Either* one passes from it, and goes on again to regard the laws as really determining what happens, and then to ratify this procedure somehow in connection with a religious view of the world. Thus there arises a sort of Natural Religion, which is also pointed to by the current expressions "eternal laws" and "iron necessity." However, that is an exceedingly weak fabric; what there is at the foundation of it is nothing but a false interpretation of scientific work and of the results of it, while it is destitute of any proof from that mental life which has been more highly developed in history. *Or*, on the other hand, one clearly realises what laws of nature are in truth, viz. a creation of the human mind in its endeavour to master the world, the gathering up of a body of experiences and of scientific investigations bearing upon them—but, so far as concerns the expression "law," and everything connected with it, a part of the natural illusion which is an inevitable accompaniment of all our knowledge.

Together with arbitrariness, therefore, we also find natural illusion again in science. In both of them together consists the *proof* that science is nothing, and can be nothing, but a completion of common knowledge, and as little as the latter itself is such, that it can be extended to knowledge of the highest description, that it can lead up to an answer to the last and the conclusive questions.

That is to say, this is the position of the Natural Sciences. For what has been set forth, so far as we

have gone, applies to them in the first instance. That the other group, the Mental sciences, as they are commonly called, the sciences of the mental and historical life of humanity, as I would prefer to say, that they are in a somewhat different position, is antecedently probable. For if science is in reality a completion of common knowledge, and the two great spheres of knowledge are *essentially* distinguished in respect to the position referred to, we have to assume that there is a similar difference recurring in science. Such is, in fact, the case. And further, the difference is traced back here, too, to the circumstance that in man's mental and historical life we have to do with our own life. For from this circumstance is derived the twofold reason that comes in to make a difference here, viz. that the often-mentioned natural illusion falls away, and that *the interest in the object, the interest which directs the activity of investigation*, becomes other than it was. We must go into this matter somewhat more deeply.

We do so first of all, certainly, to emphasise the truth that, in spite of these distinctions, science is science, and that the difference must not be exaggerated. Such exaggeration is undoubtedly resorted to sometimes with the object of safe-guarding the independence of mental life, as against all mere natural causation. In the interest of that life, men undoubtedly protest against the transference of the methods of Physical Science to the investigation of mental life and of history. As a matter of fact, that sort of transference occurs, not merely in the form of ridiculous exaggerations, against which the simple intelligence of man can itself find

protection, but also as a natural error resulting from the impression which the grand successes of Physical Science inevitably produce on every one. And against that kind of transference we ought, of course, to be on our guard, by keeping before our minds the differences alluded to above. But at the same time it is true that the method is *often* the same, and *must be*, simply because in both cases we have to do with scientific technic, and that not merely does that frequently *look like* a transference of the methods of Physical Science to this other sphere, *but is in truth such a transference*, so far as the method and technic employed have first been applied and tested in the investigation of nature, in connection with the more rigidly circumscribed problems there presented. And the legitimate interest we have in the independence of our mental life in nowise requires us to raise any objection to this procedure. One can only think it does when one accepts a radically false interpretation both of the technic that governs the investigation of nature and the results arrived at by it. Let us not, therefore, be disturbed by such anxieties in our assured conviction that science is science, and that therefore, notwithstanding the differences, there is really to be found, and there must be found, a far-reaching affinity between Physical Sciences and Mental Sciences.

There is found to be a resemblance in the simple fact that the particular Mental Science also isolates its object artificially from the whole, from the full stream of mental and historical development and tradition, and looks at it by itself as if it were the whole. Psychology, *e.g.*, which, with its Physiological basis, forms

the transition from the Natural to the Mental Sciences, looks at mental life as if it were nothing but a psychical process. The rich content of it is only taken into consideration so far as it comes in to modify the phenomenal forms of this psychical process, and makes this or that element of them the characteristic specialty of each separate group of phenomena. In this limited capacity, in which alone it can really count on permanent results, Psychology is itself a product of scientific technic, by no means a simple and pure reflection of what is really given in experience. The case is not otherwise with such sciences as avowedly make the *content* of mental life the object of their research. Thus Ethics directs its attention to men's consciousness of ideal norms for their life and action, as that consciousness is expressed in speech and custom, in conscience and legislation; it contemplates the whole from the point of view which is thus given, and which is peculiar to it, without attending to the rest of the relations of that whole. If we learn from Technics how we may fitly regulate our procedure, and from Logic how we should think, and from Psychology how judgments and injunctions originate in the mind—Ethics is concerned only with what is meant when it is said we ought to act *rightly*, with what history teaches us about men's consciousness of this matter, about the origin and development of that consciousness, and about its value and significance. Or the Science of Religion looks at the fact that men have always felt themselves to be related to supersensuous powers, and have put themselves in relation to them, that they have associated their life, its wishes and the satisfaction of them,

with that relation. In short, every science of the kind pursues *its own* object, which it isolates from the whole, and looks at by itself. And to that, moreover, there is nothing whatever to object, so long as there remains the living consciousness that that is an *arbitrary* separation—the word being understood in the sense previously explained, so long as every theory is definitely and unambiguously subordinated to the purpose of *knowing the whole*, and so long as *this* purpose, this interest, is also avowed at the critical points, and in the summation of results the whole is not by any possibility dominated by the part.

But now it is a matter of much more importance that the same technical procedure equally governs the work which is executed in detail. The Mental Sciences too, analyse their object into its simple elements, and compose it again out of them. They too direct their view to the "laws" by which the coexistence of these simple elements is determined, and by which again the course of mental and historical development is regulated. Thus Psychology proceeds on such principles. And yet nowhere is it so true and so plainly observable that these simple elements with which it reckons (Sensation, Thought, Feeling, etc.) are in no case given purely by themselves. For here experiments, which completely isolate the simple elements and exhibit them by themselves, are precluded by the nature of the subject. Here, therefore, it also comes to light with special clearness, that scientific construction by means of analysis and composition is nothing but a means for knowing what is real, never a description of what is really given itself,

and therefore, too, as contrasted with the object, never without an element of arbitrariness and art. The same thing recurs no less in the higher Mental Sciences. We isolate particular parts of the content of actual experience, and think of them each as perfectly realised in that aspect of the matter which forms the outstanding feature of them, and we compose the object of knowledge again out of these parts which mutually limit each other. Thus, *e.g.*, what Kant called the Categorical Imperative, an ideal construction of this kind, one which is perhaps nowhere found in reality occurring purely by itself, is the most important simple element of all moral experience. In short, the fact that we prosecute science and attempt to know what is real after the manner of science, means simply *that we intersperse that reality with such intellectual constructions, or weave them round it, as the case may be*, in order by these means to know it better and more accurately. In respect to method, there is no difference *in principle* there between Physical Sciences and Mental Sciences; the differences determined by the object have their analogy in the differences within the particular group, and are not therefore of a kind that goes back to principle. And this identification has nothing hazardous involved in it, nothing that conflicts with the higher feelings of value associated with our mental life, because on the one side as on the other it is a mistake to regard these constructions of scientific technic as a presentation of what is real and not as a means for knowing it.

But now, of course, there are at the same time differences occurring, the origin of which is charac-

terised in the way which was previously mentioned. In the first place, there is the difference that natural illusion ceases. However, in respect to scientific knowledge itself, that is not a pure gain, but serves at the same time to make the work all the more confused. I refer here to the notion of law particularly. In mental and historical life there are laws in the simple and proximate sense of the word, in which sense the term comes imperceptibly to be understood even if laws of nature are spoken of, whence illusion is thereupon the result. But, on the other hand, in the study and investigation of mental life and history, we also speak of laws *in the sense of laws of nature.* And if what has just been said about scientific inquiry in this group of sciences as well as the other is correct, it is inevitable that we must do so; indeed, the problem is all the more thoroughly solved here too, the better we succeed in having such laws (laws of nature) ascertained and established. But in this way there comes to be an immediate *danger of confusion,* which may again assume different forms. And in this there lies a fruitful source of errors and distorted conceptions, one which cannot be closed up altogether, but can only be rendered harmless from time to time by the adoption of the necessary precautions. In so far there is implied in the circumstance touched upon an aggravation of the problem. But still that fact must be thrown into the shade by the other consideration, that here a species of knowledge is won in which the object is not veiled by such illusion as we have spoken of, and threatens to slip away from us if we do away with the illusion. But before we estimate that matter from the point of

view which determines our study, a word may be permitted in advance as to the second consideration which occasions a difference between Physical Sciences and Mental Sciences.

The interest which guides the activity of research is, as I have expressed it, different in the one case from what it is in the other. This point, too, was previously referred to. In the sphere of mental and historical life we have not merely an interest in what is common and in what recurs, but in what is individual as well, in what is so peculiar as to be incapable of repetition. The science, too, which occupies itself with these matters is obliged to attend to that fact. This truth is illustrated principally in historiography in the strict sense, with the *proper names* it deals with. But even apart from that the fact must be duly considered. In many spheres the formation of general notions must here be different, as I have attempted to show in the Introduction of my inquiry into the Nature of the Christian Religion. The phenomena of mental and historical life often cannot be grouped in such a way that a fundamental form is exhibited in a general notion, and that the particular concrete forms are then distinguished each by different special marks added on to it; often the difference rather consists here in this, that the common marks receive a different content in the particular concrete form occurring in history, and owing to a new mark even the order of the fundamental elements becomes quite different. Here the truth is imperatively enforced, that general notions are a means for knowing what is particular, and inattention to this truth leads to fatal errors. But especially does

the difference between the two spheres of knowledge find expression in the fact that we call mental and historical life, in contradistinction to nature, the sphere of *Freedom*. For by so doing we assert this at least among other things, that the general theory with its laws cannot comprise an element of reality which is of importance for the whole as also in every particular instance. And the fact that it involves no contradiction to speak of laws of nature in mental and historical life, and at the same time of Freedom, should be evident without further explanation, considering the way in which the former from all that has already been said require to be understood. But it should be equally evident, too, that while Freedom is thus accentuated, it is not brought without mediation, like a *deus ex machina*, within the scope of our theory. We have clearly realised to ourselves from the first that our human knowledge can never be of an ideal kind, that what is individual in the particular case always in some measure and often in a considerable measure eludes it. That applies to the sphere of nature as well as to the sphere of history. But in the former we pay no further attention to it, and do not need to pay attention to it, because there is no interest of ours attaching to it. It is different in the sphere of history. And therefore the latter is called by us the sphere of Freedom. It is the *interest* that guides the activity of research which is different in each case. Or, to make the equality and difference quite clear to ourselves: let us assume for a moment that at the basis of all conscious mental life there are material processes exactly corresponding to it, and that we are in a

position to obtain an exact knowledge of one and the same series of processes along its two sides; in that case what we call in the mental series Freedom will occur also in the material series, but in the form of "accidental" minute divergences which it is impossible to bring under a general formula, under a law of nature. It is therefore a self-consistent method of inquiry, when we say that history is the sphere of Freedom, whereas nothing of the kind is found in nature. What accounts for this divergence of the one sphere from the other is the difference in our interest, this leading us in the one case to pass over as accidental and unessential the very same thing that seems to us in the other to be important and significant. The denial of Freedom springs from a false interpretation of natural research and its results, though here that interpretation produces no harm, owing to the interest which is determinative in the case; but, when transferred to mental life, it suddenly turns into glaring error. In nature we have to do with the sphere over which we are called to be masters, and by that consideration, too, the effort made to know it is determined and dominated. In mental and historical life we have to do with our own life. True, in this case also the knowledge of it, and principally again the scientific knowledge of it, assists us to dominate and guide it. But above and beyond that, we have here the other interest of self-contemplation and self-knowledge, the interest of raising ourselves—the individuals among us—from isolation to the knowledge of the common problems, purposes and aims of our race; and here it is

absolutely indispensable for us, and if we take things as they are without doing violence to them by our prejudices we cannot possibly refuse, to recognise *the fact of Freedom* and to take it as well as other facts into consideration.

The difference between the objects of our common knowledge implied in their belonging either to nature or to the mental and historical life of humanity, is therefore also of importance for scientific knowledge and for the problem of science. It is so no less from the point of view which determines our discussion. Not, it is true, as if a way were shown in the Mental Sciences, viz. by the scientific completion of common knowledge, to arrive at an answer to the question of the first cause and the final purpose of all things. That issue is and will continue to be precluded, because knowledge in the strict sense, even that of science, has experience as its presupposition, and experience does not reach beyond the sphere of finite existence. But certainly the consideration is forced upon us that, if anywhere, we may say that in the knowledge of mental and historical life, and consequently in science as comprised in the Mental Sciences, there will be offered the connecting links for a knowledge of those last and highest relations of all that is real, which were mentioned. And this for the reason that here and here alone there is a kind of knowledge in which natural illusion falls away, in which we know what is real without weaving this veil round it. But at present we have not advanced far enough in our study to go farther into that matter. We come back to it by and by in a wider connection. At present we have

to bring to an end the discussion relating to science and its problem. We do so by comparing what has now been set forth with another conception, and seeking to refute the objections which spring from the latter.

It must be expected, then, that in opposition to the view here set forth, it will be maintained, with some impatience perhaps, that there is a radical mistake in it as to the problem of science. That problem, it will be said, does not consist in extending and correcting common knowledge, but in *explaining the world*, and this end science accomplishes by tracing back all reality to the laws prevailing in the world; the former effect occurs only in so far as there is always implied in common knowledge too a certain amount of explanation. At least it is this that is taken by large classes of people to be the problem of science—although frequently in that case what is called science is tacitly identified with Physical Science. Indeed, such a conception must be described as the ruling one, as the one most extensively prevalent among us. We cannot therefore refrain from giving a glance at it by way of examination, and coming to an understanding with reference to it.

For this purpose we must first of all settle the general question what "explaining" means. And here too, in order to arrive at an issue, we turn to common consciousness. But here the matter is not quite so simple as it is in the question of knowledge, inasmuch as the usage of language varies. The only thing left is to inquire whether all those cases in which we use the word have not really something in

common. Then in that common element, so far as there is such, the real nature of explanation would have to be sought. Now, such a meaning, pointed to by the word itself, can really be established. Explaining in the proper sense always means—*referring the unknown to the known*,[1] a definition for which I appeal to the experience of every one who has ever attempted to explain anything to another and to make it intelligible. Naturally, and as if spontaneously, he seeks connecting links for his explanation in what the other already knows; and if it is at all possible, he shows that the phenomenon to be explained is an element of a fact already known, or results from other phenomena already known, as the case may be. Or—and that must be the case most frequently occurring among us—he refers the given fact to a rule already known, or, as the case may be, to a combination of several rules. If this is all in vain, he then, of course, first communicates the general rule to the other, and illustrates it by simple examples, *i.e.* he instructs him or extends his knowledge, in order at length to give the explanation by referring to what has thus been communicated and made plain. But if that, too, cannot be accomplished, because the other does not possess the necessary preliminaries for understanding the knowledge communicated, the attempt at explanation must be given up altogether.

From what has now been said, it is clear, too, why the usage of language as regards the word "explain"

[1] Cf. Goering, *System der kritischen Philosophie*, ii. p. 229 ff.—To this book I owe not merely the definition given above, but in general the emphatic distinction made between knowing and explaining. But then, of course, the application of this to science which is made above, does not harmonize with Goering's intentions.

is various, so much so that the correctness of the definition given above is not immediately apparent. For, in the first place, in what we call explaining there is frequently, if not as a rule, involved at the same time a communication of knowledge. Then on this account it may escape observation that it is not in that circumstance, but in the reference of the unknown to the known, that the *explanation* as such consists. But above all, there is to be considered the other element in the case mentioned above, viz. that this known factor is mostly a general rule or a law. For on that account the relation between the new matter submitted for explanation and the known reality which serves to give the explanation, often comes to be only indirect; what is really known, viz. the facts from which we previously gathered the rule, does not come at all or comes only indistinctly into consciousness. And in that way the element is then obliterated in which the explanation as such consists, and in which alone it can consist. Thus we even say that a phenomenon has been explained to us if the cause of it has been proved to us. If now the connection of cause and effect exhibited in such proof is already familiar to us elsewhere, or if there is an analogy between it and other well-known cases, we are right as regards the explanation. But if that is by no means the case, there has been an explanation furnished only in so far as it is a habit among us, native to the human intellect and confirmed by constant exercise from earliest youth up, to ask in every case about the cause; and it is therefore taken to be something which is known that in some form

such a connection occurs everywhere. In such cases the process would more correctly have to be described as an extension of knowledge, because it is one in which that feature predominates over the explanation. Where a human action forms the object to be explained, we are even more accurate in this regard. In general such action is held by us to be explained if its motive is pointed out. But suppose there is a motive named to us for a strange action, a motive regarding which we neither know from our own experience nor yet from that acquired by other people, that it can lead to such an action, in that case we call the action, in spite of the explanation, the actual correctness of which we do not perhaps doubt, inexplicable or inconceivable. In short, the explanation consists in the reference of the unknown to the known and familiar. And only in proportion as something of the sort enters into it can the explanation be held to be really what it professes to be.

All this applies to daily life, to the intercourse with men and things that takes place in it. The question is now what explanation means in science.

Now, in the first place, in *education* in science we again find the same circumstances which we have just become acquainted with. In such instruction, explanation and the communication of knowledge are most closely connected with each other. But the knowledge which is communicated is that which relates to general rules and laws, most sciences among us having at this day an imposing possession of that sort at their disposal. And the explanation consists in the reference of the particular matter to

these laws. Here it is *these* that pass for what is already known, that by which the explanation is given. The scholar learns in this way to explain the things and processes with which his science is concerned. Probably this position of matters contributes not a little to the habit we have of saying that the task of science consists in explaining the world. But that that is not determinative in the matter, every one will admit. In truth, it is not the knowledge of laws that comes first, but our acquaintance with particular facts. The laws which are communicated to the disciple of science at the commencement of his novitiate, with the effect that he learns now to refer the unknown to them as to something known, and in that way to explain it, are nothing but the garnered fruit of that labour in interpreting the facts which previous investigators expended in the science in question. This order of study is often reversed in education in consideration of its purposes. In order to see how the case really stands with science and its problem, we should not look at education in science, but must rather look at scientific work itself.

In the latter, also, we find much that agrees with what has been set forth above. We have an instance in the first place, if we succeed in tracing back a group of facts to a law which is otherwise known already. In that case, we say these facts which had not hitherto been explained at all, or had only been defectively explained, have now received their explanation. The same thing appears if we succeed in deriving a newly-found law from other laws already ascertained. In that case, also, we say an explanation of it has been

got by means of these. And in another way still, an explanation of this kind is met with in connection with scientific work. *Hypothesis* is of the greatest importance there. Science takes those great steps in advance which are made in it, by bringing forward new comprehensive laws, hypothetically in the first instance, and then seeking to realise them in connection with the facts, to prove them correct by means of these. If the latter endeavour succeeds, then we say the facts have been explained by means of this hypothesis. Undoubtedly all this also contributes to make it appear to us to be the task of science to explain the world. But in truth it cannot serve to establish any such conception. For what we describe as an explanation in all the cases just mentioned, is only a link in a connected chain of operations, which make up the whole of the labour of science only when they are taken together. And further, it is not the critical link of the chain, that which gives the whole its character. The critical matter is rather *the discovery of the laws*, the enunciation of correct and fruitful hypotheses. In that lies the *pith* of scientific work. An explanation (in the sense just established) can always be arrived at only on the ground of such *discoveries* which go in advance. However important it is, it remains something which is on the whole really secondary and subordinate.

The question, therefore, is whether the discovery or construction of new laws, in which, as was said, lies the pith of scientific work, can be described as an explanation, and is exactly and pertinently characterised by being so described. Doubtless, along with that

there is a second element that forms a necessary part of scientific work, viz. the discovery of new facts. But it does not really require to be proved that this, taken by itself, is not explaining but is simply discovery. The question is how the case stands with regard to that other and most important process. Now, it is certain that it is not an explanation, at all events in the common sense hitherto maintained. The laws to which we refer the facts do not come first, nor are they what is known; it is precisely these that are till then unknown and that are newly discovered. Therefore, too, it has even been said (by Goering) that scientific explanation is a reversal of the common process, that it is a reference of the known to the unknown. Yet in what sense that is at all conceivable it is meant that that can be called an explanation, is utterly unintelligible. What we have there is not explanation, but discovery. The task of science and what it actually accomplishes consists in this, that it extends our common knowledge, works it up, arranges it, and so makes it an ever more perfect means for mastering the world—as has been amply shown in the preceding pages.

But then, is not the question we have been discussing a mere dispute about words, whether the process is to be called this or that? Is it not the important thing, and the only thing that has to be considered, that whatever the *name* it gets, agreement should prevail as to the *fact*, as to the question what science has to do, and that that can be nothing but the ascertainment of laws from the facts of experience and according to these?

The latter remark applies so long as we judge the question from the point of view of the positive sciences and their interests. But, looked at from that basis, the decision of *all* the questions here discussed, together with the whole theory of knowledge, is pretty much *a matter of indifference*. And that holds to a greater extent the more "exact" the science in question is, the more firmly consolidated the body of its operations. It is only when the *whole* is looked at, and we have to give a conclusive estimate of the results of science, that such questions arise as that here discussed. And then, looked at from the point of view thus presented, it is anything but a mere dispute about words, whether we have to acknowledge the *explanation* of the world or the completion of common *knowledge* to be the task of science. I mean, of course, that there is no objection to the name, to the word in itself. One may by all means represent the explanation of the world as the aim and the task of science, and interpret that by saying that science refers what is real to the laws prevailing in the world. The point of importance is, that one has always to be conscious of what is meant by this explanation, viz. that it is something entirely *relative*, that it does not carry us beyond the knowledge of what is actually given, beyond the "that," and does not contain *the least information* as to the "why" and "wherefore," that even the "laws" are nothing but an expression for that organisation of our knowledge of what is actually given which is effected by scientific technic. For it is this alone that represents the truth. Science, with all its constructions, never reaches anything but stiff and stubborn actuality, anything

but knowledge as to that. By this means nothing is explained, in the proper sense explained, not even the simplest process of everyday experience. I know that an event has occurred thus and not otherwise in innumerable instances, and I connect with this the expectation that in the future, too, it will be repeated in the same way. I am perhaps in a position to deduce the process from laws both progressively and retrogressively. But it is as little explained to me in the strict sense as, say, the first beginning of all motion, or the connection of material motion and conscious sensation. I cannot for a moment count with *unqualified* certainty on the repetition of it in all time coming. For, apart from the consideration that the development in nature trends away forward itself, and many laws, therefore, hold good only temporarily, it is not established so as to be beyond the reach of doubt in any single case in the future that counteracting causes, disturbing influences, "laws hitherto unknown," will not come in to produce a modification. And therefore we must be contented with the position that what we know is always in the end only an aggregate of facts, with which knowledge reasonable expectations for the future are connected. If the explanation of the world which science furnishes is understood in this relative sense, with all the reservations which have now been insisted on, then, of course, there is not the least objection to the word or name.

But is it really this that is understood when it is described as the task of science to explain the world, and when it is said of science that it also accomplishes that task in a surprising manner? On the contrary,

the common thing is that the explanation of the world is understood in the *absolute* sense. That, of course, has not a rational meaning. For even if we reached the utmost point (a point, doubtless, that never will be reached), viz. by bringing out a supreme, all-comprehensive generalisation, by putting all that happens under a single formula, what would be gained? After all, only the final goal which a scientific mastery of the facts can set for itself, that mastery which itself again, we must notice, remains subordinate to the practical purpose entertained. There would be nothing thereby explained, absolutely nothing whatever. Much less still can this be the case when we take what science, as a matter of fact, is in a position to accomplish. And therefore this conception is a root of error in our time as scarcely anything else proves to be. From *it* result the excesses of those who seek to derive even mental life from material motion, and hold it to be "explained" in that way. It is *it*, no less, that is the source of the self-sufficiency with which so many investigators of nature think that the beginning and the end of truth lie in their sphere. It is *it*, finally, that leads inevitably to ideas which look very like a revived Natural Religion. For, after all, what was previously shown to be the natural meaning of all explanation is tacitly enforced. But the laws which, seeing that everything is explained by them, come to stand for what is known and self-evident, can occupy this position only if they are understood and interpreted mythologically (p. 95). And in this way Natural Religion is at length complete, although only as something very vague and colourless. These are the dismal,

and yet very widespread, consequences of the common view of the problem of science.

But, it will be asked, is there no explanation of the world then at all? Must we be contented with a knowledge of what is actual, and never get beyond that? That would be a rash conclusion; it does not by any means follow from the premisses here set forth. But it does certainly follow, that such an explanation—if there is one—does not lie in the direction of knowledge and science. And that seems to me to be a fact that no one gets over who has once clearly realised what was pointed out at the very outset, viz. that in knowledge and science we have a question of *power*, not of man's wishes or of a Categorical Imperative. Above all does every prospect of the sort vanish with the recognition of the arbitrariness that inevitably predominates in scientific technic, since mankind, as finite beings, are really not privileged to arrive at an ideal state of knowledge. On this path of positive science we simply *cannot* arrive at any explanation of the world in the absolute sense. Rather does such explanation unavoidably demand that we should bring something of our own nature to the facts, that by means of other powers of our mind, ideas should become attainable by us which furnish the key to it. For only if there is something of the nature of truth which is immediately certain to the mind, only *if that is pre-supposed*, can there be a satisfactory comprehension of the world derived from it, and in that way an explanation achieved. Or, in other words, explaining the world is *a speculative problem* and extends *in principle* beyond what positive science can accomplish. Within

the province of science the connecting links for that explanation can only be sought, as has been stated, in that group which is concerned with the mental and historical life of men. We come back, however, to that in a later connection. Here it only required to be shown that objections which might be brought forward, on the ground of the common view of the problem of science, against the conception here represented, are not sound.

And with this issue our third study has attained its object. By it we have been convinced that science—understood in the strict sense of the word—is in principle not differently situated from common knowledge. There too we find that the picture of the world drawn for us by Physical Science is in great part a creation of our minds, not a product of necessity arising from the constraint of the will to live, but certainly a work of meditated art, struck out in the interest of those practical purposes of the human race which are comprised in our intellectual sovereignty over the world. Of course it is not absolutely a product of arbitrariness any more than that can be said of the picture of the world held up to us in common knowledge; experience with its facts is the only decisive court of appeal; and only because that is the case and so far as that truth really has effect given to it, has science, like common knowledge, any value for man's practical purposes. But yet, on the other hand, arbitrariness had a share in the origination of it, and here that factor came to be a carefully planned study. And further, the mythological element of our knowledge, our attempt to make things intel-

ligible to ourselves by importing our own nature into them, cannot be proscribed even here; a circumstance that serves to supply full proof of what has just been said. But, in the next place, it is also found here that the science which concerns itself with mental and historical life is in a certain respect more favourably situated. Not, it is true, because it too strives to ascertain laws of nature in the sphere belonging to it; by so doing it rather pays an unavoidable tribute to the superior development of Physical Science. But the assertion is made in so far as it is in a position to eliminate the mythological element spoken of. In that way it and it alone, in contradistinction to Physical Science, opens up a prospect of connecting links for another and higher interpretation of the world, that in which our human knowledge for the first time reaches its consummation. *For the principle of such an interpretation we can expect to find only in the highest truth that has dawned on men in the course of their history.*

A question of importance *on the ground of principle* for the theme here treated has not yet been discussed, or at all events has only been incidentally touched upon. But it must not be passed over. Not as though we would have to deduce from an examination of it any essential alterations or additions affecting the results obtained up to this point. But the confirmation of those results as against important objections requires us to go into the matter. We intend, therefore, to devote a special study to the question, before we settle in closing what is the result of all these discussions when we look to our main purpose.

What is in my mind is the following. We started with the conviction, and we have adhered to it throughout, that *the facts* and these alone decide as to everything that goes by the name of knowledge. That principle applies not merely to common knowledge, but also to science, and is a law for it. We find that the necessity for that assumption springs from the circumstance that what, according to the judgment of people generally, has to be understood by knowledge, and what the positive sciences also understand by it, is only to be had by attention to facts. And further, since there is no modification of this principle that can be effected, since every one without exception is guided by it in daily life, and modern science owes its great successes to the procedure which is prescribed by it, the matter must rest there. Nevertheless, knowledge is often regarded and estimated in quite a different way. It is not the facts and contact with them that are taken to be the decisive test, but a universal element of knowledge which engenders *Necessity*, which is given *a priori*, which is exhibited in Logic and its laws, which has its best illustration in Mathematics and its necessary conclusions. Now, one who holds such a conception to be correct will and must reject as erroneous what has here been set forth. And he will not be embarrassed if he has to raise objections and to state grounds of appeal drawn from the actual constitution of our knowledge which *seem* to support such a conclusion. We shall therefore have to inquire what there is in these grounds of appeal. We shall have to show that they are quite compatible with the conception repre-

sented by us, whereas the opposite interpretation of them is erroneous. And only if we succeed in this will we be warranted in holding the results we have obtained to be assured. But we cannot have to give a connected exposition of this subject. What requires to be shown is that all such objections are unfounded. But that can only be done if we look at them in succession. Even on this procedure the common element in which all these objections unite will appear plainly enough. And at the close a remark of general import as to the error underlying them all will be suggested without difficulty.

We ask first what is meant by the demand that all our knowledge must have a *necessary* character, by the assertion that it is only in necessary propositions that the mind's need for knowledge finds rest. Hitherto we have heard nothing of this. The knowledge of what is *real* in the plain and straightforward sense seemed to us hitherto the only goal worth striving for. We have had to confess to ourselves that it is not always possible to attain this goal, that it is attained in a *perfect* degree only in the rarest cases if at all (p. 25), and that there is no absolute security against error. And now is a piece of knowledge to obtain full value only by its acquiring a *necessary* character? Let us inquire, then, what is meant by this necessity of knowledge which is demanded.

In the first place, everything is necessary that forces itself upon us or is extorted from us, so that man when he has to do with it is subjected to constraint coming from within or from without. Definite action in a given situation is necessary, if it is by the impulse of

the Will and not by deliberation that the person is guided. The means are necessary if the end has to be accomplished and the circumstances allow of no choice of means. But—all that has nothing to do with knowledge. It certainly, however, is a circumstance which comes within the sphere of knowledge, when the judgment we pronounce is extorted from us in the event of a fact being forced upon our attention. And this necessity, this constraint implied in facts, is of course the basis and fundamental datum of all assured human knowledge. Such compulsion is found in the most definite form underlying all our knowledge of nature. But still it is the same even where we are dealing with the knowledge of mental facts and historical occurrences. Only it is much more difficult there to get so far as the constraint of facts, and in the sphere of history there are often long preparations and artificial intermediaries required for this end. Wherefore, too, the certainty of the results sometimes continues here to be doubtful; and it is often difficult to introduce direct constraint, and to arrive at the trustworthy conclusion thence resulting. Still what is aimed at is the same. It may be said that in this sense there is an element of necessity, of compulsion, involved in all assured knowledge. However, it is not this necessity that is meant by those who will have necessary knowledge alone accounted full and true knowledge. For this compulsion is nothing whatever but a means for apprehending what is *real*. Our knowledge of reality rests on the constraint of facts, but there does not spring from this a species of necessary apprehension which surpasses the knowledge

of reality derived from experience. If there is anything of that kind, it must rest on some other basis.

We are often found to maintain about this or that event, that it will necessarily occur in the future. Where this language is used, not in a thoughtless but in a deliberate manner, and with good grounds, it is founded on an experience of somewhat large extent, or on the results of scientific skill, as the case may be. Here necessity denotes the highest degree of confidence with which we express an expectation based on past experience, or, looked at objectively, the highest degree of probability which a prediction can reach. With all this the possibility of error must always be stipulated for in every particular case. For who knows what counteracting causes, etc., may come in? But then that is nothing but knowledge based on experience, knowledge of what is in the highest degree probable, *i.e.* as good as certain, as to the further course of things real. In this too, there is nothing of the nature of necessary knowledge surpassing all that we can derive from experience.

Manifestly in order to find that we must look in quite a different direction from what we have turned to as yet. We have hitherto directed our attention to the *relation of human thoughts to what is real and what is given*, and sought such necessity as combines both, and thereby completes knowledge. But on this path we find nothing except a knowledge of what is real, more or less assured according to its foundation and origin in each case. Manifestly the necessity which is meant is that which concerns the *relation*

of Subject and Predicate to each other. The judgment in which knowledge is comprised must not merely assert that anything is so and so, or that it will have this or that issue with a probability bordering on certainty, but that it cannot possibly be otherwise, *that it must be or happen so and not otherwise.* And further, that conclusion must be one that forces itself as utterly unavoidable on every one who expresses the judgment—the requisite intellectual education being presupposed. That is the necessary knowledge which is meant and demanded, and in view of which the "contingent" knowledge derived from experience is estimated as something subordinate.

Now there is necessary knowledge of this kind, and that undoubtedly. Every simple analytic judgment is necessary in the sense just described. The fact, *e.g.*, that all bodies are extended, we can express with the full consciousness that it is not merely the case, but must be, and cannot possibly be otherwise. For what is not extended is not a body at all; we do not give it the *name;* and therefore, where we meet with a body, it must be extended. However, so regarded, necessity seems to amount only to a verbal explanation. But no one asks for that. And those too are not thinking of that who demand necessary knowledge. For it is meant to be knowledge of what is real and given in experience, only it is plainly represented as necessary knowledge. Consequently on this path too what is sought is not to be found.

The only method left is to combine both courses or both points of view, and to observe whether we are

led up in this way to necessary knowledge of the kind required. To this end let us first of all realise to ourselves that even the pure analytic judgment is no mere verbal explanation. One who candidly utters the above-mentioned statement, that all bodies are extended, does not in so doing mean to give any verbal explanation; if that is our intention we express ourselves differently; if we say that all bodies are extended, we have the consciousness that we thereby express quite a universal indubitable truth, one that rests on a comprehensive experience. And such is in fact the case. Underlying that proposition as the ground of it, there is a universal recurring element of all the experience that is derived from the interaction between us and the things of sense, viz. this, that in spite of the manifold and great differences otherwise occurring, they yet have all something in common: they fill up space or they are extended. And further, that is a common characteristic of them which it is not merely useful but which it is indispensable for us, in forming and communicating knowledge, to fix down by means of a definite word (Body). In this sense the proposition in question expresses a universal and necessary truth, real knowledge of Things such as includes an element of necessary knowledge.

We conclude, therefore, that in necessary propositions of this kind two things must meet, a comprehensive experience, and the formation on the ground of it of a word which has already included in the notion of the subject what is meant by the predicate. And now it is not by any means always the case that, as in the judgment just dealt with, the latter of these two

factors exhibits a complete preponderance. In other instances the former rather preponderates and gives the judgment its character. In that case it is an utterance regarding the future of the highest probability, an utterance supported by past experience, or a judgment which joins past experience and the expectation for the future into one. It seems *necessary*, because here too the correlation of subject and predicate is an element in the case. Thus we shall be warranted in saying that the judgment "All men are mortal" is in this sense a necessary judgment. In itself an utterance regarding the past and a prediction founded upon it as to the future, the judgment acquires the character of one which is necessary, because for us it belongs to the nature of man that he should be mortal, and the person who should not be subject to bodily death we would no longer reckon as belonging to the human race. Therefore it can also be said absolutely: Man is mortal, man must die. Where, on the other hand, this element does not enter into the case, the judgment is not necessary in the strict sense of the word; there we have only the necessity which is identical with the highest degree of probability. And necessary knowledge in another sense than that now explained does not exist on the ground of common knowledge and positive science—at least if we look away for a while from Mathematics, which requires special consideration.

Now, is there any alteration effected by this means on the character of human knowledge as we previously got to understand it? Not the least. Even this necessary knowledge rests on experience, is derived

from it, and from it alone. And one who should think now that from different sides human knowledge really approaches necessity, that there is wanting as it were only the little dot on the i, but that it can doubtless be supplied by virtue of the exigency inherent in human thought or by the postulates derived from it, would fall into serious error. For, in opposition to that, it has not merely to be stated that in such questions the least signifies as much as the whole, that the gap which still exists is the foul and broad ditch across which no one can spring who wishes to keep firm ground under his feet, but above all there stands in opposition to that idea the fact that this necessary knowledge does not indicate any approximation whatever to a higher stage of knowledge, if we compare it with the simple knowledge of experience. In these *necessary* propositions themselves there is always inevitably *a measure of arbitrariness* contained, as to which we gathered that it is a natural accompaniment of human knowledge. These are themselves further removed from the ideal of knowledge than such exact description of a particular fact as is based on experience. And after what has already been said (p. 35) these two points do not need to be treated here at greater length.

In the next place, the fact is pointed to that in all our knowledge there is included an *a priori* element, by means of which definite forms are prescribed for it, so that it necessarily originates in these forms and not otherwise. Let us give a glance at this subject too by way of examination. Of course the question of Phenomena and Things-in-themselves, or of the real

and true relation of Thought and Being, continues here too to be beyond the range of our view (p. 8): the proper place for going into that is only at a later point in the thread of our discussion. Here we simply ask what peculiarity in our thought or knowledge actually testifies to the fact that it is bound to certain Forms and Categories that are one with it in origin, and is realised in them of necessity. They are principally the Categories of Substance and Causality that are mentioned as having this character. Only in them, it is said, does human knowledge come into existence; and our knowing anything is held to mean simply and solely that we combine in these Categories the manifold which is given in Time and Space.

We shall not indeed have to deny that that is correct. In the formation and communication of human knowledge we cannot possibly dispense with these Categories. Thus it has previously been shown that in our knowledge we have to do principally with Things and their Properties and with Causes and their Effects (p. 41). We may add that there is no human knowledge at all which abstracts entirely from those two Categories. For even in the case of the further possible content of knowledge then alluded to, we are quite unable to set aside the Category of Thing or Substance. But at that previous point of our inquiry we also ascertained what there is underlying this fact as the ground of it. In the first place, it is the principle, inherited by us from the first, which leads us to make everything intelligible to ourselves by importing into things the unity of our own nature, and ascribing action to them such as we know from our own ex-

perience. On the other hand, it is the practical purpose of our knowledge, which imposes upon us the necessity of conceiving it in these Forms and no others. For the important matter for us is to know what we have to expect of things, and what signs of the future are contained in the present. Now, both these influences have been operative as long as there has been in the world what we call human knowledge. And at this day as much as ever both of them determine knowledge, in so far as no one can completely escape the natural illusion that was referred to, and in so far as there is in every one the practical need which impels him to acquire and to propagate knowledge. But what has thus acted on generation after generation, and what is suggested to each new generation as much as to all those that have preceded it, by the conditions under which it thinks and knows, that naturally comes to be constitutive for the intellect itself. By this means the native intellectual apparatus has long since received its stamp. It is therefore correct to say: we think and know "necessarily" in these Forms.

This is what can be made out on the path of empiricism as to the "*a priori*" element of our knowledge. So regarded, it is of course anything but an original datum of reason, one which has a basal significance, as it is held to be by those who ascribe to it, let us say, a creative function in respect to everything that goes by the name of human knowledge. But for us it is sufficient here to note this real aspect of the matter, and to show that that becomes perfectly intelligible from the points of view here accepted, and that there is nothing implied by it

that gives ground for an objection to the estimate of knowledge presented by us. One who is of opinion that there is something of the kind implied founds on something different from what is given in experience for all and what every one must recognise, viz. on an answer to the question of the relation of Thought and Being, a question which has not yet come within the range of our present discussion.

The third subject we intended to look at was Logic and its laws. Logic, according to the general acceptation, prescribes how we should think. Is there not then to be found in Logic another and perhaps a higher criterion of truth than there is in experience, in our contact with facts? Is it at all right not to mention Logic till this point? Should we not have directed our attention to it from the first as the most important and really decisive factor?

The latter requirement, at all events, is not warranted. In respect to its original existence knowledge is in no case dependent on Logic. It arose and continues to arise out of experience and on the ground of it, under the practical compulsion which has often been alluded to. So too there was knowledge, not harmonising, indeed, with the rules of art and scientifically completed, yet of considerable compass, long before a system of Logic was thought of at all. In regard to the latter, we find no exception to the rule that there must be an actual object in existence—in this case the thought that casts itself over the expanse of things—before it can be made matter for scientific treatment. Each of these considerations proves that the supreme and really decisive criterion of truth is completely

independent of Logic, not merely at first, when there was as yet no Logic, but permanently and for ever. And this decisive criterion is nothing but the constraint of facts, consequently something as to which experience and it alone decides.

But, again, we do not speak as if on this account *the great importance of Logic* for human knowledge and its development ought for a moment to be disputed. It is only when we rise from particular knowledge to general propositions that human knowledge attains its full position. And it is only a scientific knowledge of "laws" that empowers men to subject the world step by step to their dominion, and to realise a civilisation of wider compass. Thus it comes about that in the acquisition as well as in the application of our knowledge we have frequently and indeed usually to proceed along paths that are exceedingly intricate, paths on which we are not guided by the determinative control of facts. On these paths Logic as the science of right thinking must be our conductor, by directing us how to regulate our thought in all its aspects so that it may be true to fact and serve our purpose, a result, however, which it can itself again accomplish only on the ground of experience. Of course, therefore, there is found in Logic too a criterion of truth. But it is a *secondary* criterion, and remains entirely subordinate to the other which is given by the facts and by contact with them. Just in the same way in scientific pursuits, no one doubts that we have to correct our ideas of what is possible and impossible by what is brought out as real.

To put the matter briefly: *Logic is a Technic, it con-*

tains no moral laws. Never and in no case is it by itself alone a source of truth. If Mill asserts that that is really sometimes the case, and illustrates the remark by saying that the conclusion is logically true even if the Major and Minor premisses are as a matter of fact false, the reason given itself shows best how weak grounds the assertion rests upon, and that in such cases, to put it plainly, we have not much more than Logical trifling. Mill gives as an example in point the conclusion: Mohammed is a prophet, if the Koran has proceeded from God. But no one propounds such conclusions or takes any interest in them, who does not hold the judgment to be true from which the inference is derived, or who does not at least take it into consideration as possibly true. And it is only in that case that the conclusion is of any significance for our knowledge. But how the matter stands in that regard, it is not Logic but only experience that can decide, or at all events reasons different from those of Logic (the example of this is found in the sphere of Faith). And that is not due to any awkward selection of the example in the present instance; whatever example may be chosen, there remains a mere play of thoughts if it is not possible to make out anything as to the truth in another way than that followed by mere Logic. But as Logic is thus not an independent source of truth, it has also no absolute *legislative* power. The claim which its rules have to our consideration is no other than that which all technical rules make on the specialist. The fact that there are some of these which in view of the purpose they serve can *never* be neglected, is nothing

peculiar to Logic, but recurs in the most different spheres of human aspiration and activity. Only in other spheres, such rules, seeing that they are self-evident, have usually no special notice whatever taken of them; whereas in Logic they bear the proud name of "Necessary Truths." The only really absolute law which there is in the sphere of knowledge is this, that we should always honour the truth, and seek it with all the means whatever that are available. But that is a *Moral law*, and the establishment of it has nothing to do with Logic.

From this it follows that Logic solves the problems proposed for it all the better, the more closely it connects itself with the particular sciences, the more carefully it takes into consideration the problems of the latter, which have always to be shaped in conformity with the objects. It must not hesitate on its part, too, to note the differences thence resulting, and to set up rules for one department which do not hold equally for another. Where it goes to work in this way, or in so far as it does so, it furthers the progress of science. On the other hand, its discussions relating to the absolute Laws of Thought and Necessary Truths have no value, or at all events only little. For, as has already been indicated, these are of such a nature that they are equally empty and unassailable. He who spends time and strength upon them wastes both. He who claims for them the attention and interest of others makes an unreasonable demand, which those like the workers in the special branches of science, who are concerned to do what is of some use, rightly decline to listen to.

It is even questionable from the first if we can speak of truths of Logic in the same sense and with the same right as we speak, *e.g.*, of truths of Physics or of History. In these and similar spheres, a statement, a proposition, is true which agrees with the reality known to us from experience. Now, can we describe it as being *in the same sense* a truth that if a is equal to b, and b is equal to c, then a is also equal to c? Rather would we have to describe it more correctly as a truth that we commit no error whenever we make use of this form of inference—of course with the necessary caution. In other words, here we have always formal, technical rules. But then what an error it is to describe the principal and therefore also the most self-evident and emptiest of these rules as Necessary Eternal Truths, and to pay them, we might almost say, corresponding reverence!

A glance at these so-called Necessary Truths will confirm what has been said. It is principally the Law of the Sufficient Reason and the Law of Identity, with its two attendants the Principle of Contradiction and the Principle of the Excluded Middle, that are wont to be named. But we can set aside at the outset the Law of the Sufficient Reason, because, strictly considered, it does not belong to the Category in question at all. For, however important it is to accept or to affirm nothing without good and sufficient reasons, yet every one easily sees that it is only on the ground of experience that it can be made out what such reasons are, where and when they do suffice, and where and when, on the other hand, that is not the case. For even though they consist of Logical con-

siderations, yet in the particular case it can only be decided on the ground of experience whether they *are competent* to establish a definite positive assumption. The Principle of the Sufficient Reason has simply a subjective significance. It contains an indispensable *maxim*, and one that cannot be sufficiently taken to heart by all who have to do with truth. There is nothing to be discovered in it of the nature of necessary truth. There remain the other three Laws mentioned above.

They are *necessary* in the strict sense that what they assert *must* be so and cannot possibly be otherwise. And they have this character, too, in that sense of necessity in which it is based on the relation of Subject and Predicate to each other. From what has just been said about truths of Logic, they cannot, strictly speaking, be described as *truths* in the common sense of the word. At least not so long as men do not feel themselves under the necessity of informing each other that this tree is this tree, or that a line is not both straight and not straight. The question can only be whether they have to be reckoned as being of telling significance in their capacity as formal rules. Now, in this regard it cannot be denied that a significance accrues to them which extends to our *whole thinking and knowing*, in so far as every judgment is false which conflicts with them. That, too, is the circumstance to which they owe the respect they receive. The question is, however, whether they can pass for rules which one does well to observe for the purpose of making real use of them. But if we put the question so, the answer turns out to be different. In

that case we can speak only of a very limited significance at most, if we can speak of any significance at all. And further, it would rather have to be attributed to the two derivative principles than to the Law of Identity itself. Each person requires only to observe how he himself proceeds, as a matter of fact, to be aware that this view is correct, to see, viz., that in the rarest possible cases, if in any, he has occasion to reflect on these Laws with the view of putting them in application. But perhaps the negative characteristic above mentioned, according to which no correct judgment can conflict with them, suffices to guarantee a place of honour for them in Logic? That depends on what view we take of that science. If we regard it as something of value in itself, and assign an independent value to a structure of abstract formal rules built up in accordance with technical principles, in that case the authorisation referred to will seem sufficient. On the other hand, if it is regarded as a useful science, aiming at real work such as furthers man's endeavours after truth, in that case we shall assign to these laws only a very subordinate position in Logic; perhaps, indeed, we shall only treat them with some degree of thoroughness, for the reason that it is always necessary even yet to destroy the delusion according to which these laws, in themselves as empty as they are self-evident, would have a claim to the exalted name of Eternal Truths. In no case is there anything to be found in Logic and the significance which it really possesses, that stands in contradiction with the conception of human knowledge represented by us.

Lastly, we cannot refrain from giving a glance in

turn at Mathematics. The *rôle* which it has always played, justly or unjustly, in the question of the theory of knowledge obliges us to do so. And only in this aspect do we intend to take it into consideration. To pronounce a judgment on any points of Mathematical knowledge as such is not requisite, nor could I presume to do that.

An emphatic appeal is made to Mathematics by all those who dispute the purely empirical character of our knowledge. As a fact it furnishes the most convenient and at the same time the clearest example of so-called *a priori* knowledge. On the other side, the attempt is made, nevertheless, to demonstrate the empirical character of Mathematical knowledge, and so to cut off at the outset the far-reaching conclusions which have often been drawn from the opposite assumption. And the arguments, moreover, which are adduced in support of that position are worthy of all consideration; and he, above all, will be inclined not to take a low estimate of their evidential value, who under all circumstances can see in the inferences bearing on the theory of knowledge which have been drawn from the *a priori* character of Mathematics, nothing but bewilderment. At all events, we have here a philosophical dispute regarding which we cannot say that it is decided in the one sense or the other. But if I am right, we have been placed by the foregoing discussions in the happy position of not requiring to mix ourselves up in that dispute.

The situation is this, that *pure* Mathematics—and we have to do with that in the first instance—stands in a peculiar position. It develops all its pro-

positions deductively from some few axioms which are taken as the basis, the soundness of these being obvious to every one who can understand them at all. And further, these axioms are not derived from experience in the common sense of the word. Nature nowhere shows us what Geometry understands by a straight line, a circle, a triangle, etc. Still less are the elements of Arithmetic given in the things with which we become acquainted in experience, since number rather has its origin in *man's contemplation* of things. Further, Mathematics advances from these simple propositions to complicated systems, without ever requiring to prove the truth of its assertions by the test of experience. As soon as they are reached, the propositions are obviously correct and necessary, without any test of them being requisite in other courts of appeal. We can understand, therefore, in a great measure how Mathematical knowledge has at all times attracted attention to itself, and how it has so often been praised as the ideal exemplar of all science.

But the question is whether the propositions of pure Mathematics can really pass for *knowledge* in the proper sense of the word. Now, he who does not allow himself to be blinded by the brilliant merits of Mathematical science, will have no choice but answer this question in the negative. At least that answer will have to be given so long as we adhere strictly, as the facts require, to the simple notion of knowledge according to which we have in all knowledge the apprehension, the perception, of something real and actual. For so long as we do so, we need no

inference whatever; it is simply found at once that here we cannot properly speak of knowledge. In *pure* Mathematics we are not moving at all in the sphere of reality and of research in connection with it, but in the sphere of abstraction. What we can know, in the strict sense of the word, is only the fact that there is inherent in the human mind the capacity of developing a constructive activity of such a kind that its results compel recognition, as regards the elementary portions, on the part of every normally constituted and sufficiently developed intellect, and, as regards the more advanced branches, on the part of every one who can follow them at all. The propositions themselves are only truths in a hypothetical sense, subject, viz., to the presupposition that there are things to which they can be applied, and that it is of service in the interest of real knowledge so to apply them. But whether that is the case or not is decided here again solely by experience.

However, as the similar estimate of Logical truths was not meant to give ground for any denial of their worth and significance, there is as little thought here, or still less, of any denial of the extraordinary importance of Mathematics. Of course, if nothing could be done with its results in the investigation of nature, it would have no further significance as respects the development of our knowledge. In that case Mathematics would be neither more nor less than an intellectual game for exercising one's wits. The circumstance that it rather admits in truth of a far-reaching application in the Natural Sciences, that principally because it has co-operated with them, some

of these have themselves been put in the position of acquiring the character of deductive sciences, fully justifies the high respect which it enjoys as a science. Only it does not therefore cease as *pure theory* to be a formal auxiliary science. Its object is not what is really given, but an element of what is real, isolated from it by means of arbitrary abstraction, and still further transformed in the interest of the ideal construction.

But it will be said, the surprising thing consists just in this, that this constructive science advances on its sure course without troubling itself about experience, and then after all, as respects the relation to experience, its results have that peculiarity which has just been recognised. To explain this circumstance, it will be inferred, is the real problem; and it is held that such an explanation is reached only by the assumption that the human mind is able, by means of the original, innate power of thought, and independently of experience, to discover truth. At least here lies the point where one usually takes one's stand, with the view of turning to account the fact confronting us in Mathematics in the interest of such a conception of human knowledge. But that is to say, in the interest of a conception which proceeds on quite different lines from those which we have followed in what has preceded.

However, nothing would be more erroneous than the opinion that the fact confronting us in Mathematics contained a decisive argument in this controversy. The circumstance that Mathematical results, gained without regard to experience, can be applied and turned

to account in experience, becomes perfectly intelligible even without the mystical assumption just mentioned. We only require to keep in mind that the axioms of Mathematics, while they are not derived from common experience, are as little capable of being realised apart from it, whether as altogether imaginary or as produced in the human mind by magic or juggling. We have rather, as has already been indicated above, *elements of experience*, which we have isolated from it by artificial abstraction such as has long since, of course, become a second nature to us, and which we have so far altered, by means of the arbitrariness that comes into play here as in all knowledge, that they now answer our purpose. We shall have to subjoin a few sentences on this topic, distinguishing, however, as the case requires, between the two main branches of Mathematical science, Geometry and Arithmetic.

Geometry looks at no relation of things except the *one* element of juxtaposition in Space. Accordingly, in leaving everything else out of view, it rests entirely on an artificial abstraction. Not, however, as if its constructions had on that account nothing to do with experience. It is and must be quite a general element of all sense experience that its attention is directed to. So too its constructions, although not occurring in nature in the sense in which Geometry conceives them, have still *approximate* prototypes in the natural forms of things. We find straight lines, circles, triangles, etc., approximately in nature. From these the corresponding ideal representations of Geometry are formed, according to Mill's acute observation, by the exaggera-

tion of some of their features; in which form they then furnish a suitable basis for the superstructures of Geometry. And from this as the genesis assigned to them we have quite a sufficient explanation both of the necessity of their conclusions, their independence of experience, and of the applicability of them to the things of experience. Owing to their ideal character, they are Necessary. A straight line must always be the shortest distance between two points, since we understand by a straight line nothing whatever except just that; and for the same reason all the points in the circumference of a circle must be equally distant from the centre, etc. But what there is in experience directly corresponding to the ideal constructions, is the subjective element of it, our thought brought to the objects. The things themselves directly correspond to those constructions as little as the ideal figures are to be found in the things. Only the divergence from the ideal construction can itself again be made in most cases a matter of calculation. There is nothing else in this agreement which is striking or wonderful, so far as it is not meant (a position which is open, of course, to every one) that everything is found to be wonderful because it is, and is just as it is.

The case is somewhat different with Arithmetic. It is different in so far as the elements of it are not obtained by abstraction from objects, but are connected from the first with *our mode of apprehending things*. In reality, every thing and every occurrence is something standing by itself; nothing is perfectly equal to anything else. But because the differences, which are often quite trivial, do not fall to be con-

sidered by us, we put down the things and occurrences as equal, and also count them on that understanding. Here, therefore, we have to do entirely with our apprehension of them, or grouping of them, as the case may be. But so far as the grouping is possible from any point of view, and so far as there are words which designate the things or occurrences according to the common element which determines that grouping,— just so far does the counting also go. It is as far from being merely arbitrary as the comparison and grouping are themselves, and the resulting formation of a notion or word: the one process, like the other, is based on the actual constitution of things, else men would not have arrived at all at this idea, because in that case both would have been useless for the supreme purpose of our intercourse with things. But our subjective apprehension is after all the main point in the case; and here arbitrariness has wide scope: from one point of view I count one way and from another I count differently. If, now, we abstract completely, as we do in Arithmetic, from the fact that we have real objects to deal with, and if number only is taken into consideration, we have in that case to do simply and solely with one element of human apprehension and thought. Accordingly we observe further, that Arithmetic is a science the application of which is much wider still in its reach than that of Geometry, since it is itself again of service to Geometry. Its applicability extends just as far as anything whatever in this manifold world can be an object of human apprehension and thought. But the fact that its conclusions are necessary is as far from being in any way

wonderful, as their applicability in experience. The wonderful thing again is only the fundamental fact itself that we exist, and that there are things which we can make serviceable for our purposes, a fact which can also, as one takes it, be regarded as not wonderful at all, but as being in the highest degree natural.

Mathematics is therefore indisputably in a peculiar position. Its conclusions one and all are necessary in the strict sense of the word. And further, that necessity is of a similar nature to that previously treated of (p. 125), and yet of a different nature: of a similar nature in so far as it also is based upon the separation of an element common to all experiences of a definite kind; but yet of a different nature in so far as it is not merely the formation of a word consequent on that circumstance (the resulting correlativeness of the notions) that combines Subject and Predicate by strict necessity in the conclusions in question, but the constructive activity of the mind that creates definite ideal figures and magnitudes. In a different way from what we find anywhere else, the magnitudes with which Mathematics operates are products formed by the mind itself. In a higher degree, therefore, than in any other field of apprehension, the conditions are here fulfilled under which we can arrive at necessary apprehension. And hence comes the unique peculiarity of Mathematics, which recurs nowhere else, that from these ideal formations it starts with, it can, without questioning experience, develop whole systems of necessary cognitions. But just as they are in this way necessary, and because that is so, the conclusions

of Mathematics are for the same reasons valid *a priori; i.e.* even apart altogether from all experience, no one can doubt their validity. However, it is as far from being disproved by this necessity which they exhibit, as it is by their *a priori* validity, that, as compared with all reality, they have in the first instance simply a hypothetical significance. If this caution is as a rule of no great importance, that is due to the fact that in most cases the knowing mind itself again decides as to the conditions of application. That is the result of the fact that, as we have just explained, number does not lie in things themselves, but springs from the combining power of the mind.

But there is nothing implied in all this that stands in contradiction with the conception of knowledge represented by us. On the contrary, Mathematics forms the best proof of the correctness of that conception. In virtue of the position which it takes up as a matter of fact in the study of the Physical Sciences, it is *an illustrious example of the arbitrariness* which is inherent, as we have seen, in scientific technic. If we were privileged to possess or acquire an ideal knowledge of reality, we would not work at Mathematics at all. *The Creator of the Universe does not measure and calculate.* But certainly we men are required to do so, in order to master things and to be able to take up the position appointed for us in the world and relatively to it. *Mathematics has been the light that has illuminated the path of Physical Science.* In Philosophy, on the other hand, it has proved to be an *ignis fatuus,* which

has only too often decoyed men when giving an estimate of human knowledge into false paths.

Further, there falls from this position—and the fact must not remain unnoticed—a new light, supplementary to what we have already derived, on the statement made in a former connection (p. 111) regarding the common conception of the problem of science, according to which it consists in explaining the world. We have seen that the Mathematical element is of the greatest significance for everything that goes by the name of scientific knowledge of nature. It always indicates an important step in advance if we succeed in apprehending anything by means of Mathematics, and therefore there is a natural tendency to push forward with that method as far as can by any possibility be done. But every advance of the kind bears *eo ipso* the character of explanation in the sense previously set forth, since Mathematical conclusions, owing to their Necessity and *a priori* validity, will always seem to be something known and self-evident: they rest, indeed, as a whole on obvious truths, intelligible to people generally and familiar to every one. That certainly is a circumstance which contributes not a little to uphold the common conception of the problem of science. But that there is nothing implied by it that serves to support that conception, so far as it stands in opposition to that which is here advocated, we do not require, after all that has already been said, to demonstrate at greater length.

In summing up, therefore, we have to conclude that what is said regarding the necessary and *a priori* character of our knowledge, and also regarding the

significance of Logic in the sphere of that knowledge, and the peculiar position of Mathematics there, has proper and real connecting links in our actual knowledge. Perfect knowledge, such as we can acquire, at least approximately, in reference to the particular fact, is not a description of the general character of our knowledge. In face of the immeasurable wealth of facts, we are rather taught that we must make ourselves masters of them by means of general notions and judgments. And thereupon a mode of procedure is started which, if the facts are regarded, always contains for one thing an element of arbitrariness. It can be most perfectly realised where it deals by means of the method of isolation and construction with the most general relations of all the things of sense, with juxtaposition in space, or, as in counting, with the subjective factor, with man's way of looking at things. But whatever form it takes in the particular case, there is a sphere of human thought thereby presented—and it is that sphere, not the exact representation of the particular fact, that determines the character of *human* (finite) knowledge—in which necessary truth, that which is valid *a priori*, obtains a place. He who allows himself, however, to determine *the ideal of knowledge* by this means, commits an error in principle, since he forgets or neglects the primary and fundamental datum of all our knowledge, that constraint of facts which simply and solely decides in the last resort as to what is knowledge and what is not. The grounds of appeal which are adduced, therefore, far from being capable of enforcement as against the conception of knowledge

which has just been advocated, can only be rightly understood and interpreted themselves, in their great but yet relative significance, from the standpoint supplied by that conception.

It seems that we have been concerned in the discussions of this chapter with matters *of knowledge and science*. However, as was already stated incidentally, if the subject is more carefully considered, it is seen that that is not the case. For, supposing the view defended in the preceding pages were the one generally prevalent (which it is not), there would not be the least change effected in consequence in the pursuit of science. And if the view here combated were the correct one, all that has been said by us regarding the practical aims of common knowledge and science would still be final. In short, two people who respectively recognise the one or the other view as correct, do not require on that account to have any distinction drawn between them either as regards the practical utilisation of knowledge or as regards the method of scientific research. It is instructive, however, to see that whether we decide in the one way or in the other, there is no difference resulting whatever in the matters which seem to be mainly or even exclusively dealt with. For it is apparent from that what interest it is in truth that stands in question in this controversy, and *which in the last resort lies at the back of all discussions whatever bearing upon the theory of knowledge*. It is no other than *the interest we have in the highest grade of knowledge*, in an answer to the questions of the First Cause and the Final Purpose of the

world. For in this regard it is undoubtedly of the greatest and most telling significance whether we have to decide in the one way or the other. But further, if there can be no doubt that *Theology* must take the very liveliest interest at any given time, and so too at the present day, in the answer which is given to these questions, it becomes plain why we have entered upon these discussions in connection with Theology, discussions which seem to lie far out of our way. Perhaps we may go still further, and say the question of the First Cause and the Final Purpose of the world is no other than the question of religion, and therefore what has been treated here has a greater interest for Theology than for any other single science. Be that as it may, it remains for us to draw the conclusion from the discussions of this chapter with reference to the proper purpose of our whole inquiry.

To this end, I return to a distinction to which repeated reference was made in the first Division, which dealt with the Development of Dogma, *the distinction, viz., between the two methods of explaining the world* which were combined in dogma with the Christian faith. One of these methods directs us to extend that knowledge of the world which is conformable to experience, and in that way to arrive at the highest knowledge, that of the First Cause and Final Purpose. The other is the Speculative method, which bases the explanation of the world on definite Ideas which have somehow come to be certain to the mind of man, so that he further derives from them the highest and what may strictly be regarded as the final interpretation of the world. Now this distinction

being presupposed, the issue of our discussions may be formulated thus: the first method, which has long passed for the rational method κατ' ἐξοχήν, and is still so regarded by many at this day, is false, is a mistaken way, one on which the end sought cannot be attained. That is the same result, though resting on other grounds, which was the most important outcome of the Criticism of Kant; and it seems to me one of the substantial merits of his philosophy, that it was the first that discovered it and turned it to account for the improvement of Theology (I. p. 279). But our result is stated more exactly thus: it is absurd to seek the highest knowledge and consequently the termination of human inquiry on this path. The position is not that it would really be desirable to do so, but that, as fate has determined, our powers do not suffice for such a purpose: the fact is rather that *human knowledge and positive science, rightly understood in their nature and origin, preclude every such attempt.* If they are conceived even in their highest possible perfection, such as far surpasses all human power, they contain no answer after all to the questions referred to, because their progress is not realised at all in the direction in which that consummation is to be found. We look in totally different quarters when we are occupied with this investigation of the real world as extending in Space and Time, and when we are inquiring about the Cause and Purpose of the world.

From this, again, the difference of method alluded to being always kept in view, there is obtained forthwith a further inference. It is to this effect: supposing it

is possible at all to arrive at a highest grade of knowledge, it can be reached only *on the Speculative path*. Only on that path, therefore, ought we to attempt to reach it. On that subject too, we have occasionally spoken already. It indicates the point from which we shall have to set out in the further prosecution of this inquiry.

CHAPTER II.

THE PRIMACY OF PRACTICAL REASON.

The Problem—The Primacy of the Will in human Self-Consciousness—The impossibility of Theoretical Speculative Philosophy, and the sole possibility of a Philosophy which has its norm in Practice—The Practical Position of man in the world the Principle of an organisation of our knowledge into a Unity—The guiding Idea of Speculative Philosophy must be an Idea of the Chief Good.

In the first Division allusion was repeatedly made to different methods of explaining the world, and latterly again they have been referred to at the close of the preceding chapter. What is meant there is always an explanation of the world in the *absolute* sense, and therefore nothing but what we have otherwise called "the highest knowledge." We can as well speak, therefore, of different ways to the highest knowledge. But the result of our inquiry, as prosecuted hitherto, was to the effect that one of the two usual ways, and that, too, the one which is both the most favourite and seemingly the surest, is not passable at all. From that we inferred that only the other way leads to the goal, if that goal is attainable at all. We have now to consider this possibility. And the question for us is, what the special nature of this other method, the speculative, requires to be, if it is to afford a prospect of success.

The general nature of the speculative method consists in this, that we undertake to explain the world, its

origin, and its purpose, by means of an Idea which is presupposed as given and valid, or else by means of several such Ideas. The prosecution of this undertaking, the mode of explaining the world, is therefore determined mainly by the Idea which is the principle of it. Again, the character of the guiding Idea depends on the manner in which it is given or attained. It must belong in some way *to the content of our consciousness*, and must have a power of compelling conviction in man, so that he cannot but hold the interpretation of the world which corresponds to it to be the highest truth. But to what side of our consciousness does it belong; where does it develop its power to produce conviction? If we consider the matter in the abstract, there are still very various issues possible here. And they are not merely possible; the History of Philosophy shows us speculative systems of very various kinds, the differences of which are referable particularly to the differences in the guiding Ideas and points of view. But there is principally *one* such difference that weighs greatly. *Either* it is the *theoretical interpretation of the world* from which the determinative Idea is derived. In that case the position of man in the world, his problems and aims, must be understood in a manner consistent with that derivation. *Or* it is *the practical mental life* of men from which the Idea in question springs; and the world is interpreted, so far as its Cause and Purpose are concerned, in accordance with this Idea; and then the truth of the explanation of the world which is thus achieved is guaranteed by the fact that the Idea could not be valid in practice, as by supposition it really is,

unless the world were constituted in a manner corresponding. That speculative explanation of the world which is of a purely theoretical kind—it would be like the other Deductive Sciences, only it would embrace not a part only of what is, but the whole—would appeal solely to the Intellect, and aim at convincing it, *i.e.* every human intellect that could follow the argumentation, of the truth of its propositions, while man would learn by it to conceive himself as a part of the world, and the laws that govern his life as a specialty, as, say, the highest form of the universal laws of the world. In the other case, the speculative explanation of the world would be of a practical kind; *i.e.* the conception of man's position in the world, and of his work and destiny, contained in the guiding Idea, would everywhere form the determinative starting-point of the conclusions to be ascertained; no one could accept these conclusions, or acknowledge his adherence to them, without subscribing to the practical estimate of himself which formed the basis of them; and the ascertainment and the maintenance of those conclusions would never cease to be likewise a practical problem. The question, therefore, briefly stated, is this, *whether in the last resort man has to be interpreted and understood from the point of view of the world, or the world from the point of view of man.*

To seek a decision of this question is the task we have set before ourselves in this chapter. Or, to state the point at once more definitely, we mean to try to prove that the way described last is the right one, that the highest knowledge, supposing it is attainable at all, can only be attained on the practical path, and that it

is only on that path, therefore, that we ought to try to attain it. Nothing else is meant in the title of the chapter by the Primacy of Practical Reason. We have expressed ourselves thus, adopting the terminology coined by Kant, because it did not seem possible in any other way to give a provisional explanation of the content of the following discussions. On the other hand, a real adoption of the doctrine which Kant formulated in these words is by no means contemplated. The presuppositions on which the system he constructed rests, do not exist for us. As yet, we have not found that theoretical knowledge is in the position which he supposed. As little do we hold it to be right to regard the Moral Law as an original *datum* of Practical Reason which appears in that law as autonomous. For us, therefore, the presuppositions of Kant have no validity. Here we offer a defence of his fundamental thought which rests on grounds that are different in every regard. But because the fundamental thought is the same, being the conclusion formed as to the only possible way to the highest knowledge, we ventured to use in the title the expression coined by him. Perhaps it will appear still more plainly from the following observations, what right we had to do so.

Schopenhauer speaks not of a Primacy of Practical Reason, but more generally of a Primacy of the Will in human self-consciousness. And further, he understands by that the Will in the well-known comprehensive sense, as the other side of man's mental life which exists together with the Intellect, in the same manner as we ourselves formerly defined that notion; only

in our conception the metaphysical background of Schopenhauer's doctrine is wanting.[1] In fact, it may be asked whether this presentation of the matter is not at once more comprehensive and more correct, and whether it must not be preferred to that of Kant. However, I think that, although in this extension and transformation of the idea offered by Schopenhauer there is an element which is worthy of all consideration, yet on the whole the conception of Kant must be final.

The question of the Primacy of Practical Reason is manifestly based on the general question, which factor preponderates in the main in human consciousness, the theoretical or the practical, the Intellect or the Will. We cannot at once compare the two factors in regard to the particular matter which concerns us, viz. in respect to the way leading to the highest knowledge; it must rather be settled first how they are related to each other in consciousness, or in the mental life of men generally. Then it is only on this basis that the more particular question can be started. And it will only be possible to hold that the proof of the Primacy

[1] *Das Wesen der christlichen Religion*, p. 40. Every attempt to trace back the phenomena of consciousness to *one* simple fundamental element and its manifold combinations, is frustrated by the reality. Rather must two elements be assumed, Thought and Feeling. Thought is always a figure of something else; in Feeling we perceive ourselves as living beings. But then it is more correct to say, not "Feeling" but "Will," because by so doing we immediately give expression to the fact that in Feeling the vital impulse which creates longing or repulsion appears in consciousness. It is quite wrong, however, to speak on that account with Schopenhauer of two metaphysical entities, "Will" and "Intellect." That is mythology. We simply submit the observation that all the phenomena of consciousness include those two relations in themselves. "The phenomena of Feeling (or Will) and Thought are the co-ordinate parts of one and the same process" (Wundt).

of Practical Reason has been furnished if it can be shown that that theory corresponds to the whole constitution of human life, including knowledge. In so far the question must be connected with Schopenhauer's discussions, and put on a broader basis.

In the main, however, the more limited conception of Kant is to be preferred, because it alone gives due prominence to the point in view of which the question is of any interest, and requires to be discussed. For that point, it must be admitted, consists in nothing but the inquiry as to the nature of the path leading to the highest knowledge. Apart from that, the question hardly claims any significance such as affects principles. If it possessed such significance for Schopenhauer, that is owing to his metaphysical view, which does not concern us further here. Without such a background, it has a significance which touches principles only from the point of view just mentioned. For it is really the case, as a matter of fact, that both Will and Intellect enter into every factor of conscious life. There is absolutely no moment of actualised human life conceivable that is entirely Thought without any Feeling, or entirely Feeling without any Thought. Besides, the two are so inseparably bound up together in every element of life, that the distinction of them is only an affair of abstract reflection. But if we pass to the point of view of *value* in putting the question, it becomes no less difficult and superfluous to rank either the one or the other as the higher. On the one hand, there is nothing that signalises human life in its distinctive character and renders it of value, which is not also in respect to its possibility conditioned by the

Intellect. On the other hand, it admits of no doubt that among mankind it is in the last resort in consequence of some satisfaction it gives to the Will that anything possesses or acquires value. Now, who would mean under these circumstances to attribute to a discussion on the Primacy of the Will or of the Intellect in human self-consciousness, the significance of a question of principle? At most, the observation which runs like a red thread through Schopenhauer's discussions, that the Will puts its word in even where the Intellect should properly decide, and where people, therefore, also make it appear to themselves that they are judging simply on rational grounds, at most this observation might seem to impart a certain value to the inquiry. But it could only seem to do so. For the maxim which results from this observation, that we should accept with caution the judgment of others where their interest comes into play, is followed by most people in practical life without such demonstration, frequently indeed to an immoderate extent. But that others at the same time let themselves be deceived by the semblance of a judgment which is purely according to reality, and especially that they cheat themselves by means of such semblance, is a fact which cannot be altered in any measure by a philosophical inquiry. In short, one who does not share the metaphysical interest in the question which was manifested by Schopenhauer, will scarcely find any other occasion for raising it than that which led Kant to speak of a Primacy of Practical Reason.

Now, that motive is the interest we have in the *way that leads to the highest knowledge*. Here an alterna-

tive is presented as soon, that is to say, as it is actually established, that nothing can be gained by an extension of common knowledge. Either Theoretical or Practical Ideas determine speculative thought. And the preliminary question which leads to a decision in favour of the one or of the other derivation is the question whether the Primacy in man's mental life falls to the Will or to the Intellect.

In the first instance, our object is simply and solely to establish facts, to ascertain the state of things in reality, whether it is the Will or the Intellect that bears rule from the first. The decision is not difficult. The only difficult thing about the subject is the one point that the Primacy of the Will is such a self-evident truth that a further proof of it is scarcely required. Nothing can be said on the question that has not already been stated at length and in the best manner elsewhere.[1] And yet for the sake of completeness we require to enter briefly into the matter. Let us try, then, to pursue a middle course, to avoid any exhaustive exposition, and yet to bring forward the main points.

In the first place, it is to be observed that in the order of time the Will has priority over the Intellect. The new-born child has no ideas as yet, but is very soon and very energetically intent on satisfying its Will. And then, when the first elementary ideas are formed, they appear in the service of the Will and in

[1] Cf. *e.g.*, Schopenhauer: "The World as Will and Idea" (German edition), ii. p. 224 ff. Goering, *System der kritischen Philosophie*, i. p. 194 f. *Der christliche Glaube und die menschliche Freiheit*, p. 113 ff.

dependence on it. How could things by any possibility go on otherwise? It is self-evident that the Will to live, and to live too with as much pleasure and as little discomfort as possible, forms the starting-point for all the primitive activities of a living being. Thence proceed all its impulses; what has no centre of support here does not exist for such a being; the Thoughts are means, and in the first instance too nothing else than means, for the satisfaction of this Will. It is master, and the growing Intellect is the slave of this master. Or, to express the point differently and more cautiously: what completely preponderates in the first instance in man's mental life is that side of it which we apprehend under the name of the Will or Feeling, and the nature of which is shown by the fact that a vital impulse involving action or resistance is manifested in it, or comes into consciousness, as the case may be; Thought, on the other hand, the nature of which it is to be a picture of something else, at first passes entirely into the background, and remains wholly subordinate to the other faculty of Will.

By and by, this original, unconditional subjection to the Will ceases, and the Intellect acquires a certain independence. It is no longer the Will of the moment that governs the Thoughts; objects are observed and conceived independently of it; the child begins to judge and to form conclusions. Perhaps it may be said it is this relative independence and objectivity of the Intellect peculiar to man that distinguishes him in *the formal sense* from the beasts. That at least, trifling as it seems, is the only formal condition re-

quisite for the development of mental life in all its rich blossom. But be that as it may, people at all events succeed, some sooner, others later, in achieving such relative independence of the Intellect. Yet for all that there is as little trace as formerly to be discovered of a Primacy of the Intellect in self-consciousness. The Will rules still as it did before. The sole difference is that its servant has become more expert, that the means by which it can procure satisfaction reach farther and become more manifold. The Intellect does not really become independent of the Will, but by means of the Intellect the Will can emancipate itself more than hitherto from outside aid, and attend to the satisfaction of itself by its own exertion.

What has been said applies in the first instance to earlier youth. No one, in fact, will deny it so far as that period is concerned. Here the needs are still simple; the objects of them are approximately the same everywhere; besides, there is a want of the art of concealing the motives, or at all events the attempt to conceal them is, as a rule, naïve and transparent enough. Here, therefore, the fact is irresistibly impressed on every observer, that the Will orders and the Intellect obeys, that the free and independent activity of the latter has only limited scope. But in later years also the Will usually retains its ascendency in by far the greater number of people. And here, too, the truth is most clearly brought to light by the fact that the Will so often corrupts the judgment. If matters are dealt with which are of indifference to man, he may certainly in that case arrive at a judgment

which is purely in accordance with fact. In proportion, however, as that is not the case, in proportion as his interest comes into play, the impartiality of the judgment ceases. Indeed, it may even be affirmed that there is absolutely no person who *in all respects and in every sphere at all times* judges purely in accordance with the facts and independently of the Will. Here we all pay our lasting tribute. That is an essential part of human weakness, and a part that can never be entirely overcome. Least of all is there any change effected upon it by the circumstance that man tries to deceive himself and others as to this position of matters. That is simply a source of frequent and unintentional comicality, affording diversion to him who knows the truth.

Nevertheless, there is to be found among us *an independent objective body of knowledge*, such as has emancipated itself from the sovereignty of the Will. That, too, is a *fact* that cannot be doubted. *Science* as such alone furnishes unexceptionable evidence of this. And not merely in science, but in common life also, knowledge of this kind is widely prevalent. As soon as a person has come to show that relative freedom of the Intellect from the Will which was mentioned above, the disposition to acquire such knowledge exists. And with his advancing mental development it gains in amount. If this knowledge is not of an absolute character, and if it gives no unqualified security against error, that is due to other circumstances, and is not referable to any interference on the part of the Will. Does that fact then furnish a sufficient counterpoise to the general Primacy of

the Will in our self-consciousness? That that is not the case is plainly shown as soon as we consider the motives from which such knowledge is gathered, the impulse which leads to the acquisition of it, and by which it secures continuance and becomes a *constant quantity* in our mental life. For that impelling power, again, is nothing but *the Will*, and the Will, too, in its simple fundamental struggle for life and well-being. We may safely assert that without the constraint hereby imposed, objective knowledge would be found only to a limited extent, as something accidental and sporadic.

That seems perhaps a paradox. But only because and only when in connection with this matter we look forthwith at the complicated circumstances of the present, at the knowledge existing in these circumstances, and the mode of its origin. It is more correct and helpful not to do that, but, as in the study of all human concerns, to attend from the first, in the inquiry as to knowledge, among other things to the *historical development*. But if we do this, if we study men's knowledge as a whole which is historically developed, the fact asserted above appears in that case plainly enough. Man, according to the well-known saying, is the *animal inerme*. In the interaction between him and things, especially between him and the other living creatures, he would fall beyond recovery, if he had not the *one* weapon which has made him in a certain sense master of the world, his Intellect. If he wants to live he must use that weapon. And further, in that case it is by no means always sufficient for him to study things superficially, and to

allow himself to be guided in his judgments not by the facts but by his wishes and the inclinations of his Will. He must try with all his power to know things *as they are;* he must be bent on forming *true* judgments, on drawing *correct* conclusions; if he fails to do so he will be punished most sharply by future occurrences for this neglect. Such is the origin of objective knowledge, as we become acquainted with it in our experience. For without question man wishes to live; therefore, too, he uses his Intellect and seeks by means of it to become master of things. The better he succeeds in that, and the more complicated in consequence of this and in consequence of the spread of the human race the circumstances come to be, the more pressing again becomes the necessity of enlarging the circle of objective knowledge. The knowledge that suffices for life in simple circumstances proves to be defective under altered circumstances; in that case there is no choice; he who will not fall in the struggle must seek to increase his knowledge. It is this Will to live, therefore, from which, not merely at the beginning but also as further progress is made, the impulse is principally derived which makes us seek and extend our objective knowledge of things.

And he for whom this is not sufficient proof may interrogate present experience; it will instruct him in the same sense. For two things are shown us by it. In the first place, we observe that the vast majority of people are credulous, are inclined to error and heedless of contradictions, nothing, in fact, being commoner in men's knowledge than error and

contradiction, corresponding to the numerous sources of these which are to be found. Yet, as a rule, that credulity has after all a very definite limit; and that is the other truth which experience teaches us. In the particular case that limit is reached where the person requires an assured, objective, exact knowledge of things for his life. Here he is, or at least most are, exact in observation, precise in judgment, cautious in inference. But that, again, is only in altered form the same fact which we have seen, the fact that it is the constraint proceeding from the Will that impels man to seek objective knowledge. Far from disproving the Primacy of the Will, the origin of such knowledge, carefully considered, proves to be a confirmation of it.

Just as little will one be able to appeal successfully for a Primacy of the Intellect to the so-called *desire for knowledge*. In the first place, as in the case of the individual so in human society as it develops, that desire appears only at a relatively late period. The other needs must obtain their regular satisfaction if the desire for knowledge is to find scope. Consistently with this there must be a division of labour pretty well developed, before the acquisition of knowledge among a people can become the business of a special calling. Everywhere it becomes clear that the Intellect is something secondary. And we may hazard the conjecture that the desire for knowledge appears pretty regularly among children only where the previous generations, impelled to seek knowledge by the causes just described, have developed in themselves a corresponding disposition, which now passes over as a heritage to

their posterity. But above all, the manner in which the desire for knowledge is evinced is not calculated to give it the stamp of evidence in favour of the preponderance of the Intellect. For not only does it frequently amount to the same thing as common curiosity, such as is subservient to the Will, but it not seldom proves to be a *hindrance* to the acquisition of real knowledge. For, like the other impulses, it aims blindly at satisfaction, and offers in itself no security whatever against credulity and error. Then, of course, in an improved form, it greatly furthers knowledge and the spread of knowledge: as a natural impulse, in which form it appears sporadically in most men, it only affords further evidence of the Primacy of the Will.

Lastly, there is one point still that must not remain unnoticed. We are seeking the way that leads to the highest knowledge; from the interest we have in that way, we discuss the relation of the Will and Intellect to each other. Thus we have also good reason to ask *what occasions our striving at all to gain the highest knowledge.* We do not ask, of course, what actuates us individually in the inquiry here prosecuted, but what impels men in general in this pursuit. Is it a purely Intellectual interest that exists at bottom, the wish to acquire knowledge which is in itself a rounded whole? or is it the Will, man's practical interest in his own life and destiny? The highest knowledge, I should like to point out again, is identical with what we are otherwise accustomed to call a person's theory of the world; and there is involved in it, at least for him who recognises a highest grade of knowledge there

should be involved in it, the final decision as to his doing and suffering. Manifestly, therefore, the highest knowledge has *always* a practical significance *conjoined* with it. But we cannot stop there. It is no less necessary to state that it is a practical interest that *lies at the very origin* of the attempt to reach it. We inquire about the First Cause and the Final Purpose of the world, because we ourselves belong to the world, and our fate is bound up with that of the world. *Whence am I come and whither am I going?*—on these questions man seeks light, because, according to the answer they receive, he must regulate his life. And it is for the sake of this answer that he is concerned in any measure with the highest knowledge.

The proof of this assertion is not difficult. There is, properly speaking, a sufficient proof of it contained in the wide prevalence of the need itself. For it is positively true that that prevalence can only be explained by supposing the need is of a practical nature. If, instead of that, we had something purely intellectual, viz. the effort to attain completeness, exactness, and finality in our knowledge, the need referred to would not in that case be comparatively general, but would appear just as seldom as that effort itself occurs. And we must not by some indirect means, following Schopenhauer, attribute, notwithstanding, to men as a whole such a supreme theoretical interest. It is rather the reverse of what is right when that philosopher maintains that the people seek to satisfy their "need of metaphysics" by means of religion. The people do not know anything whatever of a need of metaphysics; they seek the highest knowledge from practical motives,

and what they seek they find mostly in a religious faith. But *that* is not an appearance the "reality" answering to which could be discovered in the theoretical need of a metaphysical explanation of the world, the effect of that discovery being that this last might be declared to be something universal among men. On the contrary, it is rather the case that the metaphysical need of the philosopher is nothing but a transformation of that practical need which is in truth the general fact, appearing somehow and at some time in most men. Schopenhauer's conclusion has been formed from a false generalisation of what the philosopher finds in himself.

Indeed, even the theories of the world, with which the thoughts of men are exercised, would have to appear quite different from what they are, if they were concerned with the satisfaction of the Intellect, and of its aspiration to reach knowledge which forms a unity complete in itself. For intellectual aspiration, nothing is more important than a cautious delimitation of the possibilities open to knowledge, and a thorough check upon all conclusions. If it keeps strictly within its own groove, it leads to no real finality. It ends in that case with the confession that we are not privileged to acquire such a knowledge of the world, as a whole, as we can attain by careful investigation with regard to the particular parts of it. The case is quite different with theories of the world and philosophical systems. They know nothing of any restriction; they are usually in their proper element when giving information as to the *whole*. There also prevails in the discussion of them a warmth of controversy which sufficiently proves

the universal *participation of the Will* in them, a participation extending to the core of the subject. Doubtless the question itself is by no means decided in this way. I mean, it is not decided in this way that such must also be the case, that it is impossible by means of theoretical speculation to arrive at the highest knowledge, that to attain this end we are directed to that speculative thought which finds its norm in practice. Here it is only meant that the fact should be established that the universal need of a theory of the world, or of the highest knowledge, has its spring in practice, and that the very manner in which it *is wont* to be satisfied furnishes evidence of this.

In what has now been said there would probably be a statement before us of what chiefly serves as the proof of the affirmation that the Will and not the Intellect holds the Primacy in our self-consciousness.

In opposition to this, what can be adduced in behalf of the Primacy of the Intellect needs hardly to be taken into consideration. That everything that constitutes human life in its distinctive character finds the condition of its possibility in the Intellect is of course quite true, but proves nothing in the question here treated. The independence, too, which objective knowledge possesses in respect to all that goes by the name of Will, cannot, as has been shown, be turned to account in this sense. Just as little is any one warranted in appealing to the fact that the Intellect, as well as the Will, possesses independent significance for our action. The fact, it is true, seems to me to be beyond question. Under certain circumstances we can act otherwise than the Will urges, and occasionally

also we do so; it is chiefly in this faculty that human freedom is manifested; and if we inquire what empowers us so to act, we find that it is from the Intellect that this possibility is derived: we find also, if we examine human action from the point of view so attained, that the Intellect (the general maxims and laws which can only be realised by it) possesses a significance for our action which is not merely sporadic, and which is independent. But, however important that fact is, a proof of the *Primacy* of the Intellect cannot be deduced from it. In this sovereignty over the Will we have nothing of an original nature, but only a matter of later acquisition. And if the Will is roused, it is maintained only with difficulty, or not at all. Where Will and Intellect stand opposed to each other, it is with the Will after all, in the majority of cases, that victory remains. From this participation of the Intellect in the determination of action, a *Primacy* of that faculty can certainly not be inferred. Lastly, we are unable to prove anything of the kind by the further fact that there are individual men whose whole interest is concentrated in scientific research, who therefore also know nothing higher than science and its problems. Those to whom this applies are mostly such as have scientific work for their vocation. And with regard to their devotion to the Intellectual interest, the case is just the same as with the devotion of the artist to his art, of the priest to his church, of every one, in short, to *that* sphere of mental or public life in which his life-work arises *for him*. In itself a good and justifiable thing, such devotion can yet be carried to excess.

From the emotional interest of its disciples, there have often enough been disturbances produced in the objective work of science, and actual errors have arisen. There is nothing, therefore, to be found that could shake the evidential value of the grounds adduced above in support of the Primacy of the Will. The conclusion of the matter must be that that Primacy is a fact.

But now what is gained by this study for the main purpose of our inquiry? I must here repeat with reference to the *whole* what I emphasised above in respect to a particular part. I am not of opinion that this Primacy of the Will *de facto*, that the establishment of it, forms a *proof* of our answer to the question of principle which is at all *sufficient*. Though it may be quite correct that, in judging and thinking, most people permanently allow themselves to be guided by the Will, or at least to be influenced by their inclination and disinclination, that is after all nothing but a *faulty* course of procedure which is widely prevalent, and which requires to be combated by every means. At all events, as was admitted above, there is at the same time an objective species of knowledge independent of the Will. It is exhibited especially in *science*. In science too, the Will seeks to assert its influence; in many departments of science it succeeds in a great measure in doing so; theology in particular has enough to tell on this head. But we all condemn that; we recognise without hesitation that a body of thought which is warped and corrupted by the Will is an objectionable product; where there is an immediate risk of its appearance we summon in opposition in our-

selves and in others *the Will to uphold the truth.* Why then should it not be conceivable that in the ascertainment of the highest knowledge too there should be the same obligation? Who will tell us that it does not continue *possible* here too as in other scientific discussions, in spite of all danger of influence exercised by the Will, to view the problem as a purely theoretical one, and to solve it with purely theoretical means? Indeed, we require at this very point to accentuate the fact that the speculative thought of Reason must not even appear similar to any such theoretical thought as would be corrupted by the Will, *if it is to be worth consideration at all.* Accordingly it is clear that this *de facto* preponderance of the Will does not yet by itself alone prove anything whatever. It is not for that reason a matter of no consequence for our purpose, since if this is the state of things it can create no surprise although even the whole body of knowledge and the organisation of it should prove in the last resort to depend on practical considerations and to serve practical purposes. But a proof is not yet contained in this fact taken by itself. *The proof* we still require to seek.

And here now the results of the preceding chapter have first of all to be taken into consideration. They prove in the first place, at all events, *the impossibility of theoretical speculative* thought. There we found that knowledge, common as well as scientific, cannot be extended up to the highest knowledge. We further saw that with respect to their knowledge, properly so called, men are absolutely confined to the sphere of the world which is given in experience. The means by

which that knowledge is won are of such a kind that it is not possible to arrive with their aid at a knowledge of the cause and purpose of the world as a whole. And therefore we conclude that it is impossible to attain that highest knowledge if we follow the path of theoretical philosophy. It is true that the point of criticism in those previous inquiries is turned mainly, and in the first instance, against the empirical method of explaining the world. And I do not mean to affirm that theoretical philosophy is nothing more than another form of that method. Rather does it contain a *characteristic element of essential significance*, by emphasising which and giving precedence to it, it is distinguished from the empirical method. We shall have to say more about that by and by. Here we have to observe that both coincide in the critical point, that the very same thing that enabled us to perceive that the one way was erroneous tells no less against this other.

For wherein does the error consist from which the empirical explanation of the world suffers as from an incurable evil? It consists simply in the fact that it applies the formal Categories of the Understanding beyond experience, that by means of them it establishes truths which can no longer be verified by any experience. Now a theoretical philosophy suffers without fail from that same error, does so not merely accidentally in this or that case, but *must* do so, as it is absolutely dependent on the sufficiency of these formal Categories by themselves alone (without experience) to ascertain and to establish truths. What is a necessity of thought is also real—so goes its canon. But that

means simply that it attributes to mankind the capability of constructing truth by the creative act of their minds. Here I leave out of consideration the mixed forms of speculative and empirical thought which have existed at all times and still exist at this day. For whatever preparation by means of empirical research and attainments may be declared to be necessary, it remains after all *the essence of theoretical philosophy*, that by a creative act the mind produces the highest knowledge within itself. He who adheres to this method must hold that somehow to be possible, to be practicable. It is not merely the case, therefore, that in theoretical philosophy too the formal means of the Understanding must have an independent significance for knowledge assigned to them (being held to establish truth by themselves alone), but they must have that significance in a much higher degree still than they have in the other method. But then if this independence is an error even where it is found only in a slight degree, a method cannot possibly be right which seeks in it its principal support.

However, we characterised the essence of theoretical philosophy at the outset by saying that it bases its explanation of the world, and consequently the highest knowledge, on *an Idea derived from the theoretical interpretation of the world.* Can that philosophy then be held now to be refuted when it is convicted of an incorrect use *of the formal means of the Understanding?* Is there not the possibility left that that very idea which governs it supplies the want of experience here, and thus sufficiently justifies the use it makes of the means of the Understanding? At all events, in a

philosophy which draws its norm from practice, something like that must be assumed: why, then, are we willing to make such an allowance there, but not to let a theoretical philosophy have the benefit of it? That reasoning may seem plausible, but nevertheless it is false. For the guiding idea of theoretical philosophy has never been anything else, and cannot, moreover, be anything else, but faith in the creative power of the Logical Forms of thought. This philosophy has therefore found its most consistent expression in Hegel and in his dialectical method. And if modern representatives of the same standpoint, like Biedermann, reject the method, and obtain their results not by it but by a sublimation of the knowledge of experience, that is doubtless a falling off from the consistent employment of the basal thought, but it shows all the more plainly the affinity of the two methods. In short it admits of no doubt that in this its purely theoretical form the speculative method is inseparably bound up with that previously recognised error of the empirical method, and must therefore like the latter be rejected.

But the discussions of the preceding chapter have not merely furnished a negative result; they have at the same time shown positively that all our knowledge remains subordinate to the supreme practical purpose of life. If the position is rightly understood, we are not now concerned with the fact that it is due to a practical impulse that men originally and often permanently seek to acquire objective knowledge. It would be quite compatible with that, as was shown, that there should be a *definitive* emancipation of knowledge from all practical impulses, as we have it

actually in *a relative degree* in science. We are rather concerned at present with the fact that in the investigation of our knowledge as a given reality we cannot take *a single step without being always led to see anew* how essentially the practical side of our mental life has to do with the constitution of our knowledge.

By looking to that practical side alone, we can in the first place discover what is *real* in the strict sense, and what all of us together must admit to be *objective reality* in some sense. The conditions of our life which lie outside ourselves are for us as real as we ourselves are, since in order to live we must accommodate ourselves to them, and have daily to overcome the resistance they offer. If we ask further what *the Things* are which we know about, there remains over, after allowing for the natural and obvious illusion resulting from the importation into things of the Unity of our own nature, only our practical need, as that which really determines the distinction and delimitation of them. And further, it is just the same with the Category of *Causality* as it is from what has been said with that of Substantiality. The idea we have of the action of things is derived from our own inner experience. The order of the varying world of objects as exhibited under this Form is not imposed upon us in the manner in which we picture it; rather do we establish that order in the world, because we are subject to the law of compulsion which requires us by this means to make things serviceable to ourselves if we wish to live. The world, therefore, as it forms the object of our knowledge, is in the mode in which we

know it to a good extent *the product of our Intellect, which works in the service of the Will.* A really exact knowledge of the world, on the other hand, excluding all arbitrariness and illusion, we do not possess and are unable, moreover, to acquire. For science, to the services of which we might here be referred, cannot furnish anything of the kind. It is true it assists us to give our knowledge a more complete and exact form, but only in the sense that that knowledge becomes all the more fitted to further our practical mastery of the world. Arbitrariness and illusion are not overcome by it; the advance from common knowledge to that of science is not merely itself again a result of the practical motive which lies at bottom, but even as an advance it can be fully estimated in the final issue only from that practical point of view.

Nothing probably favours the view that the highest knowledge must be acquired by the resources of the theoretical mind, so much as the opinion that only in that case does it exhibit the consummation of common knowledge and the crowning of the edifice of science, the character stamped upon it by the title of the highest knowledge. This opinion, plausible as it is, rests, nevertheless, on error. It is not merely impossible to acquire the highest knowledge by means of theoretical philosophy; *even if it did originate in that way, it would by no means represent an adequate consummation of all our knowledge.* Certainly our knowledge becomes relatively independent of our practical endeavours, and this independence which it possesses, in the case of scientific research especially, must in no wise be interfered with; the

latter becomes objectionable from *every* point of view as soon as it recognises any other law than that of truth *and truth alone*. But this independence is only relative. And it is precisely the truth, the knowledge which actually exists, that obliges us to recognise that in the last resort even our knowledge is subordinated to practical considerations, that therefore it does not run counter to its general character, but answers to it, when it completes itself in that highest knowledge which has been gained on the path of a philosophy conditioned by practice.

Still I would not speak even of a provisional argument for the correctness of this procedure, if it were not possible just here to refute the most notable objection raised against it. I mean the objection that knowledge gained on this path would be a product of fancy and subjective caprice.

If we speak of thought which has its norm *in practice*, and of knowledge thence derived, every one naturally thinks at first of the unwholesome influence which the Will has so often exercised on thought and on science. Then it is supposed that the highest knowledge, if it were of such a type, would also have to be estimated as that fact indicates. And if that supposition were right, undoubtedly such knowledge could not be seriously spoken of. In that case we would have to content ourselves with the purely negative result (which would, of course, even then continue valid), that we men are prohibited from reaching the highest knowledge, that of the First Cause and the Final Purpose of all things. However, it is rather the case

in truth that a speculative philosophy which has its norm in practice has *nothing whatever* to do with the thought that listens to subjective fancy and caprice. On the contrary, it is in its own kind just as objective as any science in its purely theoretical function. And since that is the case, we have every reason to inquire further whether the goal is not really attainable on this path. But first it must be shown that the philosophy which has its norm in practice is actually circumstanced as we have now asserted.

Now that certainly seems to be a difficult undertaking, and one that opens up a wide prospect. For how do we mean to demonstrate this except by the fact? How, except by making the attempt and proving by it the independence of such thought as respects the subjective Will? No other proof would be capable of overcoming one's well-grounded distrust. On the other hand, this demonstration would perfectly suffice to prove what requires to be proved here, viz. that it is *possible* to traverse the path proposed, that here we are concerned with an objective task, one which is in the strict sense common to men in general, not with a matter in which every one goes his own way as fancy and caprice impel him. But then ought we really to commence such an attempt here, and so to anticipate the end for which we are only in the act of paving the way?

We are in the fortunate condition of being able simply to appeal to an attempt of the kind which has previously been made. For such an attempt is to be found in the exposition of the "*Nature of the*

Christian Religion," which I wrote in advance of these inquiries, and to which I have already repeatedly referred here. In that work, what is treated is simply and solely the derivation from a supreme, guiding, *practical* Idea of a whole system of thought which occupies the place of the highest knowledge. And as before in that exposition itself, so now I assert again, that that is a thoroughly objective task, one at which men may work jointly. There every conclusion is completely determined by the content of the guiding Idea on the one hand, and by the actual, practical circumstances of our mental life on the other. Nowhere in the derivation of the conclusions is there scope left for the subjective caprice of the individual, for the inclination or disinclination of his Will, since in that derivation there are always norms dealt with, the objective validity of which can be proved by the most varied examples from history. That is to say, there remains, of course, in the solution of the problem, scope for the subjectivity of the scientific investigator; one can solve it better than another; no one is secured against errors in his thought. But we have, of course, nothing whatever to do with that; there is no scientific problem, however objective, with which as yet that would not always be the case in some degree. As little is it meant to be affirmed that the form of exposition selected in the former case from other considerations, that, viz., of a description of the Nature of the Christian Religion, is also thoroughly adequate now for the presentation of the highest knowledge to which the Christian confesses his adherence. What is affirmed is only this, that by the

attempt referred to, it is shown with sufficient clearness that in a discovery of the highest knowledge by a philosophy which has its norm in practice, we have a *truly objective* development of thought, such as has not the remotest resemblance to that thought which is corrupted and warped by the Will. It has rather its law as well as any other scientific undertaking. Only the law is not got from the facts of experience, however they may be given, but from the guiding practical Idea, the validity of which forms the presupposition of the whole procedure.

Is then the proof of our thesis that the highest knowledge has to be sought on the path of practical philosophy and by its resources, hereby completed? Anything but that. It is only shown that the other form of philosophy, viz. the theoretical, is a failure, and that where it is employed, fancies without any guarantee of truth must be the result. It is shown further that a philosophy which has its norm in practice would correspond not merely to the actual Primacy of the Will in our self-consciousness, but also to the importance which the practical element possesses in all our knowledge. It is shown, lastly, that such a philosophy presents an objective problem. However, with all this, it must be admitted that we have gained nothing more than the purely hypothetical result, that *if there is to be any such thing as a highest grade of knowledge*, it can only be gained on the path of a philosophy which has its norm in practice. But whether that is the case at all; whether we must not rather abandon the thought of the highest knowledge if it cannot be gained in the same way as common

knowledge—as to that our discussion has as yet brought out nothing. As little results from it as to the way in which the proof of the truth and validity of a definite, guiding, practical Idea, in contradistinction to all others as inadmissible and false, can or ought to be presented. However, I think enough is gained to make it seem requisite that we should follow out this thought further.

In the course of this last study we have met with a distinction of deep import in the sphere of our knowledge. On the one hand, there is a species of knowledge which aims at the ascertainment of the facts with which experience makes us acquainted, and which has in these facts its sole law. On the other hand, there is a species of knowledge which is determined by a supreme practical Idea. Undoubtedly it might be objected that properly the latter has been spoken of only hypothetically. But though that, strictly speaking, is right, religion, religious faith and knowledge, comes in to fill up the gap thus left open. Now religion is not merely something which is hypothetical and possible, but something actually existing in our life and in the historical life of humanity generally. If, therefore, religious knowledge is in the position indicated, it is also true that the distinction alluded to in the sphere of our knowledge is not merely a hypothetical but a real one—not, of course, that it is decided in this way that the highest knowledge, supposing there is to be anything of the kind, must have the form of a religious faith.

Now it not unfrequently happens that a distinction

is posited between *Understanding* and *Reason*. And wherever that distinction occurs, it is understood in the sense that the latter is ranked as superior to the former. The Understanding directs its activity to what is particular and actual; the knowledge originated by means of it is gained from experience and the elaboration of it; Reason, on the other hand, is the knowing faculty which is concerned with things in their totality, the organ of the speculative interpretation of the world. For the sake of convenience we intend to adopt this phraseology, and to employ it, moreover, to denote the distinction in the field of our knowledge which has just been explained. For us the Understanding is the organ of experimental knowledge; it has to do with what is actually given in experience; for it this and this alone is law; any influence of the subjective will on its judgments is a falsification of the truth, and must by all means be kept remote. Reason, on the other hand, we regard as that faculty of speculative knowledge which is determined by a practical Idea; its judgments are never in any case formed without the intervention of the mind's freedom; judgments of Value co-operate in its processes; the recognition of its results is always in part a matter of personal conviction—all that being one and the same thing, and, whatever it is called, a necessary consequence of the determining influence of practical ideas and considerations. Where, therefore, we speak after this of Understanding and Reason, these words have to be understood in the sense just explained.

But for our purpose the following element of the difference between Understanding and Reason still

requires to be clearly pointed out. In judgments of the Understanding *we rank ourselves mentally above the object of knowledge;* we become masters of it by means of that knowledge; our former studies having shown that knowledge is the principal means leading to our mental sovereignty over the world. And further, we are often enabled by it to interpose directly in the course of the events recognised by us, and to make them serviceable for our purposes. But even where that is not the case, it still holds true that *knowledge is power*, that the consciousness of an ideal intellectual sovereignty over things flows from knowledge, and is fed by it. It is quite different, on the other hand, with the judgments of Reason. In the practical Idea which determines them, it is principally the final goal, the highest pursuit of man, that receives expression, *i.e.* a truth *on which man himself is dependent*, one which he cannot recognise in his mind without being aware that he owes it obedience. Now the knowledge that is derived from that Idea cannot, as is self-evident, promote the mind's natural sovereignty over the world. The judgments in which that knowledge is expressed do not involve an exaltation of self above the object, and in view of their origin cannot involve it. It is true I would not like to say of them that they always express a position of dependence or subordination in a larger connection. If we formulate an antithesis, we have to say—while the fruitful knowledge of the Understanding issues in a feeling of mastery over the things known, the knowledge of Reason has as its starting-point a practical subjection of man to the truth expressed in the guiding Idea.

Now from this it is clear once more how and why man cannot attain the highest knowledge by means of the Understanding. If that were to be possible, there would have to be quite a different position in the world appertaining to him than he is in truth aware of having. In that case he would require to stand in such a position of superiority and sovereignty towards the world as a whole as he assumes in a relative degree in respect to particular parts of it, those which he can master by the powers of his intellect. Or, to view the matter differently, he would have to assume towards the world as a whole a relation of the kind which the Christian faith ascribes in an absolutely perfect degree to God. He who craves such a knowledge of the world as a whole as the Understanding possesses of particular facts or (although only in a relative degree) of particular parts of the world, craves to have knowledge as attained from the standpoint of God. But that is an attitude which is senseless in itself and unjustifiable. The highest knowledge is attainable by man only on the path of that speculation of Reason which is based on practice. *And the irrefutable ground of that conclusion is furnished by the whole position of man in the world*, by the circumstance that, to put it briefly, he is simply man and not God.

Still, however important, from what has been said, the distinction is which has been drawn between the knowledge of the Understanding and that of Reason, it is as certainly made out, on the other side, that in this case too separation or distinction must not continue to be *the last word.* The exceedingly important distinc-

tion drawn can only be upheld, if it can be maintained on the ground of a conception of knowledge and an organisation of knowledge as a Unity. This we are specially taught by the example of Kant. For with him there is a want of such a conception as a Unity, and of a consequent justification of the distinction. With him the theoretical knowledge of the Understanding and the faith of Practical Reason really stand *side by side* with each other, as separate things without *organic* connection. And that may not have been the least cause that contributed to make his bold discovery of the practical character of the highest knowledge be so soon lost again, to make the speculative thought of his successors return to the paths of his predecessors, those paths from which he thought he had delivered philosophy for ever. In this retrogression the desire for Unity, a desire in itself justifiable, became operative, the thought that in spite of many differences all knowledge must *in the last resort* be of one and the same type.

But while we emphasise this point, nothing certainly is farther from our intention than to return now to the paths of the philosophy that came after Kant. Our object is not to go back, as that philosophy has done, to the method of philosophical speculation criticised and refuted by Kant, and certainly, too, it is not to remain at his standpoint, which cannot be permanently maintained; our object is rather to *pass beyond Kant*, because that is demanded by the facts. Kant denied the theoretical character of the highest knowledge, but he allowed the *presupposition* to stand from which, so long as it is regarded as valid, some such character

must always continue to be inferred. I mean the presupposition of the Absolute (Necessary) character of our theoretical knowledge, which he—in this particular a genuine Platonist — himself shared; although he qualified it in the sense that he declared the world which we thus know to be a mere Phenomenon. But there is imparted in consequence to his philosophy as a whole, the *appearance* of incompleteness and of scepticism. We cannot, even in a qualified manner, recognise the presupposition and then deny what follows from it. Here we are helped only by the perception that that presupposition, and *therefore* too the inference drawn from it, is false. Our knowledge of the world is of a relative nature throughout, and is always subordinate to a supreme practical purpose. The opposite view exaggerates one side of it (its conditional independence as respects the Will), and then declares that side to be the whole. In truth, knowledge is dependent even in its origin on the practical element. By enforcing this truth we pass beyond Kant, and gain the standpoint from which the distinction set forth above between Understanding and Reason can be enforced without the conception of knowledge as a Unity being thereby abandoned. The Unity of it consists simply in the fact that *in all its parts* it is subservient to our practical mental life. The distinction stated signifies nothing except that the knowledge of the world which the Understanding secures for us, and the highest knowledge which we have to seek by means of the Reason, *occupy each a different place in the economy of our mental life, conditioned as it is by practice.* The former subserves the purpose of that intellectual

mastery over the world which is a condition of personal life; the latter opens up to us a prospect which shows us our highest destiny, its connection with the Existence and Purpose of the world, and thereby makes the realisation of that destiny possible for us.

But certainly now what has hitherto been said does not suffice to defend against objections the affirmation of a Unity *of this description* as appertaining to our knowledge. If that object is to be attained, we must succeed in showing a *really organic* connection, adequate to our purpose, between the knowledge of the Understanding and the highest knowledge of Reason. But this connection will require to be no other than that which springs from the nature of the case, and which has always therefore been assumed. That is, it must actually be shown *how and why a path leads from the knowledge of the Understanding to the highest knowledge*, and, on the other hand, *that from the standpoint of the highest knowledge a new interpretation of the objects of common knowledge is derived* —all, of course, under the supreme guidance of the practical point of view. Now this object can be attained; but it can only be attained if the distinction previously mentioned between the objects of the knowledge open to our Understanding, I mean *the distinction between Nature and History*, is duly attended to. For the knowledge of the Historical Life of humanity forms, and that too in both the ways which were just demanded, a bridge between the knowledge of nature and the highest knowledge, and therefore establishes the Unity which is requisite in the organisation of our knowledge.

We consider first the former point. The knowledge of Historical Life forms the transition from the knowledge of Nature to that of Reason, to the highest knowledge.

The knowledge obtained by the Understanding bears upon what is actually given, seeks to apprehend this as it presses itself on our notice. In it, so far as the intention is concerned, all subjective additions suggested by the Will and by Feeling are excluded; only the objective reality as such is regarded, and that too as exactly and completely as possible. Strictly speaking, however, such knowledge is found only so far as it has a sure foundation in *sense* perception, in which objects press themselves on our notice. In other words, what has been said can be maintained in the strict sense only with regard to the knowledge of nature. On the other hand, if we are dealing with the mental and historical life of humanity, with the knowledge of it, it is unavoidably necessary that a further element should be added. The conditions of knowledge are by no means entirely altered. There still remains as before the problem of ascertaining what actually exists. And as sensuous nature forms as it were the theatre for historical life, the knowledge of the latter has also the knowledge of nature by the intuition of sense as its constant foundation. Only *man's own inner experience* must now be further added, as being an indispensable means of knowledge. Without this we would stand face to face with the whole of human life outside ourselves as if it were a puppet-show, without really understanding it. That is not the case. Without question we continually

import our own inner experience into the world of men that surrounds us; our interpretation of that world rests on conclusions drawn from the analogy of our own experience, conclusions which we incessantly form without being conscious of them as bespeaking a special function. And in this way now, although by every means the most perfect objectivity is *sought*, there is after all a subjective element introduced into knowledge. It is simply inevitable that here knowledge is dependent in part on an *interpretation*, which although it is in the main objective, *i.e.* common to all, still contains a subjective element, because the means for it is man's own personal experience, which is not perfectly the same in all people. And in this issue there is already implied a paving of the way for the highest knowledge, in which an Idea that is certain in one's personal conviction becomes the principle of apprehension.

In another way still there is found to be such a paving of the way for the highest knowledge in the knowledge we have of man's mental and historical life. We have already seen that the knowledge obtained by the Understanding involves an exaltation of self above the objects of knowledge, and leads to a feeling of mastery over them; that, on the other hand, the knowledge of Reason has as its starting-point an inward recognition of the Idea that governs it and our subjection to the Idea. But must it not be said that the knowledge of the mental life which expands in history takes up in this regard too a sort of middle position? The Understanding is the organ of it, and therefore there is found to be an exaltation of self; it is also an

aim of this knowledge to order the relations of our own life and those of human society with all the discernment that can possibly be attained, and to develop them further: in so far the case is here the same as with the knowledge of nature. But while the purpose of the latter species is perfectly realised by that intellectual sovereignty over things, the knowledge of mental life and of history has another purpose still. By means of it we transcend the limits of our individual existence, and enlarge our consciousness up to that of humanity, aiming as we do at surveying the world and understanding all that is human. But that is not so much an exaltation of ourselves above the object of knowledge, as an incorporation of ourselves in it. In so far this sphere of knowledge again takes up a middle position between the knowledge of nature and the highest knowledge.

What has now been said applies to the knowledge of man's mental and historical life as a whole. If we look more closely, we discover that within the province of that knowledge again a gradation occurs. And it is observed too, it is observed precisely, from the point of view which here falls to be considered. At one time the object is by means of a sagacious combination of the items of news which have been preserved to obtain, at least approximately, a true account of the state of the past. At another time the task is to follow the course of Language and its development through history, to ascertain the laws in accordance with which the latter has been accomplished. In such cases the subjective element passes comparatively into the background. What serves as

the means of knowledge is something common to all men. There are other spheres in which the intimate personal experience of the individual comes to be absolutely indispensable as a means of knowledge. And that applies above all to those concerns of the human race in which the significance of its life is gathered up as in its sum, to Religion and Morality. True, it is by no means the common practice yet to consider those departments of knowledge, as is done here, in connection with the knowledge of historical life. Yet we shall be warranted in saying that that is a proceeding for which the way is being gradually paved among us, one towards which men have already been tending for some time from the most different standpoints. At the same time the traditional method still prevails, according to which every one follows in these questions a doctrinal opinion of philosophy. That custom, too, will not be very soon got over. If there is a question of renouncing habits of thought that have once been formed, and modifying the personal convictions which are connected with them, most people turn a deaf ear to the proposal; and, considering the difficulty and many-sidedness of the undertaking, it comes to be no difficult matter for them to conceal the prejudices that prevail, both from themselves and others, behind reasons founded on fact. But one who considers what course the development of science has followed in other spheres, will not doubt that here, too, objective science, which is concerned with what exists, and seeks its law in the facts, will gradually suppress the disputation of philosophical opinions. Still, in this whole sphere, objective science

will always be subjected to certain restrictions. And that, for the reason mentioned above, viz. *because here in a higher degree than is elsewhere the case, the subjective element, which cannot be dispensed with as a means of knowledge, is bound up with the personal experience of the individual,* and is different in different people.

Here we have to observe that the whole investigation of man's mental and historical life is narrowed to a point in the problem of gaining a scientific knowledge of these highest human interests, and that there is implied in this a further *approximation to the knowledge of Reason*, an approximation not to be denied. The problem, it is true, still remains, even in this form, one which is presented in the first instance to the *Understanding*. That which is actually given in history forms the object of knowledge. But it is simply one's own personal participation in the life of Religion and Morality that opens up an access to that knowledge; and the exaltation of self above the object of knowledge now occurs only in a limited degree. But above all—it is not possible to reach the consummation in this sphere of knowledge *without a judgment of Reason, which is always in part an expression of personal conviction.* For a judgment of the kind is implied in the decision made in favour of *definite* religious and moral ideas, upholding the truth and validity of them alone. The recognition of them is never an affair of the Understanding merely, but always in part a personal decision, an expression of the mind's freedom; it signifies in no wise as before an elevation above

the object of knowledge, but rather subjection and obedience.

Undoubtedly it is still possible to evade such a decision. It is still possible to say that one will be contented with making the nature of the religious and moral life intelligible, and with presenting it as humanity exhibits it in history, but, on the other hand, will avoid every judgment of one's own. But that would signify nothing but a simple renunciation of everything that goes by the name of religion and morality. And far from bearing an objective character, such a judgment would be the fullest expression of personal freedom. So, too, one who chose to judge thus would nevertheless be obliged to recognise that ideas are concerned which demand personal subjection and recognition on the part of man. However—we do not mean to fight with shadows: all do pronounce their judgment; and it is simply the rational course that one who is concerned with scientific knowledge and the scientific comprehension of man's religious and moral life should also seek a decision declaring what religious and moral ideas are *true*, and have to pass current generally, and to demand recognition on the part of all men. And therefore it must be said *that here the knowledge of the Understanding passes over into that of Reason.* The task of science and the solution of it cannot be brought to an end till a sphere has been reached in which we have to do with a personal conviction, a decision issuing from the mind's freedom, a judgment of Reason. Although of a totally different kind from the knowledge of nature, what we have here is and remains a branch

of scientific knowledge also. For it rests upon a perception of the religious and moral life of humanity. But the other affirmation is as positively true that it is not the Understanding but only the Reason that can decide.

But then these Ideas again form the principle of the highest knowledge. We have no option: we interpret the world from the highest standpoint we are able to attain. We do so with the feeling that we are dealing with a truth to which we have to yield obedience. We *ought* to take up the position in the world, and relatively to it, which those Ideas prescribe for us. We can take it up only by believing that the world is constituted in a manner which corresponds to them. That is the only possible path to the highest knowledge. The proof of it must be sought in the discussion relating to those Ideas.

If, therefore, we conceive the edifice of human science as raised in accordance with this plan, the Physical Sciences form the broad foundation of it. On them are built the whole body of the sciences that investigate and expound the mental and historical life of men—the transition being made in Psychology. The latter sciences on their part terminate in the investigation of the religious and moral life, which forms the core of all historical development—this investigation involving a task which cannot be discharged without a decision declaring the truth of definite Ideas, without the attempt to prove the truth of them on the objective foundation previously laid. But by this means the point is then reached where Reason crowns the whole edifice by its specu-

lative knowledge, the principle of which is found in the practical Ideas thus ascertained. In the first instance, it is *the constraint of facts*, and that alone, that decides as to the truth of our judgments. To that circumstance our knowledge of nature owes its certainty. But at the same time it suffers, on the other hand, from the defects of arbitrariness and natural illusion previously explained. Then, along with the constraint of facts, there comes as a second element that decides as to the truth, *the mind's certainty as to one's own life and its reality.* At first subordinate to the constraint of facts and co-operating with it, this element comes to have effect more and more as one which is crucial. It has the characteristic merit of liberating us, as far as its co-operation extends, from arbitrariness and illusion in our knowledge. If it is more difficult in history to get at the facts, the knowledge of it has still that incomparable advantage above all knowledge of nature. That is true in the highest degree of the knowledge of the Ideas by which we become aware of the meaning of our historical existence and the Reason pervading it. And these very ideas are the principle of the highest knowledge. Totally devoid of the certainty which the constraint of facts imparts to our knowledge, that principle rests, as regards its power to persuade and convince of truth, on the highest and best possession of our minds, that which forms the inalienable foundation of our personal life and action.

But if I am right, we are surely warranted in speaking of the attainment in this way of a conception and organisation of our knowledge as a *Unity.* Only

we cannot, it must be admitted, speak of this issue in the sense in which it is usually understood and sought. We cannot speak of it in the sense that here there is purely objective, absolute knowledge announced, such as mounts up step by step and comprises the heights and depths of all existence. But to forego that is no loss but in *all* respects a gain. For, in the first place, and this is the main consideration, that pretended knowledge is nothing but a groundless fancy. Apart from this—a point which we do not now require to enter upon anew—the *Unity* of it also is truly in an evil case. On these suppositions Unity can always be attained only by doing violence to the facts. Whether Materialism declares man's mental and historical life to be a *Fata Morgana* rising out of material movements; whether Hegel traces back the material world to the Logical laws of the mind (of Thought); whether others bring together the two spheres of nature and history, by importing the mental life of man in a totally faded form into the Monads invented by them, and then proclaiming these to be the "Thing-in-itself," as it were, at the back of all existence—in every case it is and remains an *act of violence* mocked at by reality. Ought we then to regard it as a loss if we have to forego a Unity of knowledge of that description?

What our conception offers instead is such an organisation of knowledge in a Unity as takes for its point of departure the secondary significance of the Intellect and the character of knowledge as thus conditioned and relative, *the principle of such organisation being therefore the practical position of man in the world.*

Here there is no thought of violent levelling measures. From the very same fact in which the Unity is sought the differences also result. As we take up different positions in relation to Nature, in History, and again in relation to God (who as the supreme Cause and final Purpose of the world forms the object of the highest knowledge), it is understood as a matter of course that *the conditions of knowledge* are different in each of these different spheres. In particular, there results from this difference of position what was spoken of above as the shifting of the two factors which determine the constitution of truth. The intellect defines the form in which we men, as beings endowed with mind, possess and conduct our life in its different relations; knowledge is always the necessary means and therefore an integral part in the realisation of the life. It is therefore necessary that great and far-reaching differences should assert themselves in the conditions under which knowledge is placed from time to time. But yet the Unity of knowledge is preserved and guaranteed by the essential Unity of our practical position in the world, in virtue of which we rule *Nature*, are developed in *History*, and are bound to apprehend in *God* the highest aim of our existence as determined by Nature and History.

Furthermore, with an organisation of knowledge of this description, and resting on this ground, the end would also be attainable which I described at the beginning of the previous chapter as the mark of a normal condition of science: the theory of knowledge could be withdrawn again from general notice. It would simply be the objects as such that would claim

and engross one's interest. But they would not be regarded in an uncritical manner, and as if the relativity of our knowledge, together with the subjective limitation of it, had been forgotten. That relativity would rather form the chief and self-evident presupposition of the whole organisation, and for that very reason would no longer require to have particular attention devoted to it.

It was not merely, however, a transition from the rest of knowledge to the highest species that had to be established. The second requirement was that from the standpoint of the highest knowledge *a new interpretation* of the whole of the objects that we can apprehend at all would have to be the result. We have now therefore to inquire further as to this point.

Now a new interpretation of the world is of course already involved in the highest knowledge looked at by itself. For if we know the First Cause and the Final Purpose of the world, we also learn by this means to see *all things*, everything therefore that can be an object of knowledge at all, in a new light. However, that is not the point we are concerned with here. This knowledge, as shown by all that has previously been said, is of a kind which is conditioned by practice, is the fruit of practical considerations, indeed in its application to details it not unfrequently presents a practical problem at the same time. It is always from the practical point of view only that that knowledge can be included with what we otherwise know of things so as to form a Unity. It is only this procedure that corresponds in the *particular case* to the principle just set forth, the principle which determines

the organisation in a Unity of knowledge *as a whole*. But here comes the question whether there follows from the highest knowledge a new apprehension of things such as combines *the rest of our knowledge of them in a Unity from the point of view of the highest knowledge itself*.

It may of course seem a mistake to speak of this matter before something more definite has been made out regarding the highest knowledge itself and its content. And certainly for the present we must be contented with making some general observations. But yet it is possible to fill up with hints the place that would otherwise have to be left empty. For this much results from what has been said, that the practical ideas which are determinative of the highest knowledge must be drawn from the common historical life of humanity. Or how else should the derivation of them really take place? We must not allow ourselves to be guided by a general philosophical theory, since of course the first question is the ascertainment of a principle for the knowledge that relates to the world as a whole. Still less can there be any thought of every one drawing the ideas from himself, from the observation of his own mind, or any thought of commencing with a study of the individual mind. For in that way the result can only be a soliloquy, or at most a prophetical announcement. The only way to make out anything on *objective grounds*, anything that holds true in all cases as to the work and the aim of men, is by the study of their common life in its development, *i.e. of history*. But if that is so, there is only *one* relation conceivable between what the ideas

so ascertained indicate as the task and the aim of humanity and the historical development itself, the relation, viz., of *end* and *means*.

With this perception there is therefore a new scientific or philosophical problem immediately announced, that, viz., of a *Philosophy of History*. We must not conversely make the attestation of the highest idea alluded to, and consequently the highest knowledge, dependent on a preceding solution of this problem of the Philosophy of History. That would rather mean, for two reasons, putting the cart before the horse. For, in the first place, that problem is immeasurable in the full compass of it, and can always be solved only partially, or say by an endless approximation to the goal which is set up by it. That will be denied by no one who has actually attempted to realise what is meant by conceiving the whole of history in all its parts as a path to a predestined goal. The consequence therefore would be, if the problems were taken in the order just mentioned, that an Idea which was really attested would never be arrived at, nor therefore a highest grade of knowledge. However, that would not suffice to condemn the order. The objection might of course be put forward, that it is not at all made out that a highest grade of knowledge should or must be arrived at. The chief point is therefore the other consideration, that without an idea of the goal of history there can be no Philosophy of History whatever. For in what else can that philosophy consist except in the attempt to conceive history as the path to a goal, as means to an end? But if so, it is clear that such an idea must be formed before there can be

any thought of a problem of the Philosophy of History. Certainly that idea itself must not be imposed on history from without, but must be derived from history. But that is nothing but what we have demanded of those ideas in general which are to form the principle of the highest knowledge. And the only matter of importance here is that we should show that the ascertainment of it must take precedence; the attempt to solve the problem of the Philosophy of History can only follow. And here it may further be expressly observed that they are entirely different things that have now been described as first and second. In the one case, the object is to establish what goal Reason as prevailing in the history of our race points us to, which is comparatively speaking not a difficult matter, as soon as the nature of the question is recognised. In the other case, the object is to show how the particular proceedings of a nation, and then again of the totality of nations, become intelligible in their action and reaction from the standpoint of the goal of humanity as thus recognised, a task which is simply endless.

The question naturally arises whether this task, which in the first instance relates to one sphere of our knowledge, the historical life of men, can by any means be extended to the other sphere, that of nature. Must it not be possible that *in the same sense* in which we now spoke of a Philosophy of History there should also be *a Philosophy of Nature?* In the latter the object would be to conceive *the development of the Natural world too as a path to a goal*, as means to an end.

Indeed, it is really beyond question that Nature too has a history, and that there is a development taking place in it. It is not merely in the revolution of the year or of longer periods of time that things exhibit movement here. There is also along with that a *forward* movement occurring. All that, looked at quite in a general light, is just the same as in the life of humanity, in history in the strict and narrower sense of the word. And the assertion is not disproved in the present case any more than in the other by the fact that the development does not proceed without catastrophes. The idea of development is therefore perfectly familiar to modern Natural Science. In the investigation of the organic world it has long since proved to be a fruitful principle of research, one which teaches us to ascertain the connection of facts and to discover new facts. But we have nothing to do with that here. That is always the affair of particular, definite sciences, and does not enter here into the question. Here the question is only whether it is possible to obtain a *general view* of the history and development of the Natural world, to comprise all particular matters in a system *which forms a Unity.*

At the present day there is no want of attempts to accomplish something of the kind. In all probability, too, such attempts will always continue to be made, as they are concerned with a problem which will ever preserve its attractiveness for the human mind. And there is no objection to be made to them. It only requires to be remembered under what conditions the problem is placed, and what therefore is the only way in which it is *rightly* apprehended.

In the first place, it must be distinguished in the most positive manner from the problems of exact science. In the prosecution of the task the check supplied by experience is often wanting. Knowledge like what is possessed by science with regard, *e.g.*, to the physical relations of the world and to chemical processes, cannot be acquired here. We have to do with a *sphere which is full of open questions and conjectures.* But not simply that, and that too is not the most important matter. The other consideration is of much deeper import, that even if such a constructive theory is carried out to a much greater extent than people have hitherto succeeded, or will ever probably succeed, in carrying it, and though it is proved to be true, the whole body of knowledge continues after all to be *relative*, so long as it rests only on what is actually ascertained. It signifies nothing except that things have probably gone on in a particular way and not otherwise, that they will perhaps or probably develop further in a manner corresponding. But by this means not even the simplest occurrence in the whole series is explained or understood (p. 115). Or, at most, that can be true of such occurrences as the analogy of one's own human experience somehow extends to, a fact, however, that makes no difference in the character of the method as a whole. It is and remains a series which runs on enigmatically between an unknown beginning and an unknown end. Still it is implied by the nature of the undertaking that this body of knowledge is not meant to be and cannot be merely provisional and relative. It is meant to be the final, the highest and the conclusive species. Hence, where

it appears under the pretence of being nothing but exact science, it is mostly completed in the sense of Materialism, and occupies the ground of a more or less avowedly Materialistic conception of the world—this procedure being, of course, nothing but a *begging of the question.*

The rational course is that we must first of all clearly realise how the case stands, how we are no more concerned when occupied with this problem than we are in the Philosophy of History with setting forth merely what is actual, but have to do rather with a *philosophical interpretation* of it. It is a *Speculative* problem, which can be approached only if a principle is brought with one to it, the correctness and truth of which have become certain in some other way to the human mind. It is only from such a principle that courage and confidence can arise sufficient to convince one that the more or less hypothetical theory is real *knowledge.* In particular, it is only by this means that the stumbling-block can be removed which arises at crucial points, such as the origin of consciousness or of the human race, where the development, it must be admitted, assumes an *abrupt character, advancing by a sudden leap to a new stage.* Or, in other words, the presupposition of such a theory is *the existence of a highest grade of knowledge*, in virtue of which we are convinced there is a Creative Power prevailing in the world, and a supreme Purpose appointed for the world. We have to do with a species of knowledge which, if it is really to be regarded as *knowledge*, must be combined with a personal conviction.

More particularly, the Purpose of Nature, of its history and development, can be sought only in humanity, in the fact that "man is the crown of the creation." We men can find or discover nothing in the whole world that surrounds us that equals man and his mental life in value, or that actually surpasses him. And we are directly conscious of the fact that in so judging we are not yielding to a prejudice, although one which is excusable in men, but are expressing a simple truth—a truth which is given us in and with our position in the world, so that we can no more disregard it than we can renounce that position. In the simplest functions of our mental life as in our whole practical relation to nature, that presupposition is implicitly contained, and by both it is confirmed as true. We must therefore form our idea of the purpose of the development in nature in accordance with it, the results furnished in detail by scientific knowledge also responding to such a thought. But yet that idea would have no sure support if it were not confirmed and sustained by the conviction of a purpose with regard to men and their history. The idea that the development of the natural world has man in view as its specific purpose, becomes a rational thought only if I am able again to speak of a purpose for which the world of men is destined. Each of these ends, it is true, must continue to stand by itself, and they must be limited by each other. The study of Nature has its limit in the circumstance that there must be a point where mental and historical life begins; but the development of Nature, again, cannot be referred to the purpose of that life whatever it is; and therefore,

too, the question of this purpose must not be mixed up with the discussion of that development. But Natural Philosophy *as a whole* is only possible, or at least only rational, as an *Introduction to the Philosophy of History*, both together being supported and confirmed by a knowledge of the Supreme Cause and Final Purpose, the principle of which is the highest idea as to the task and aim of our race that has dawned on men in their history.

From all this it appears, therefore, that in this knowledge which we acquire in the Philosophy of History and in connection with Natural Philosophy, we have really a further bond of union between the highest knowledge and the rest that we possess, that we have a combination of the latter in a Unity from the precise point of view of the principles which are determinative of the highest knowledge. It is of course impossible to get farther in this respect than the enunciation of an all-embracing problem, one at which all have jointly to work, although it will never be perfectly solved.

In the above paragraphs, now, I think we have furnished the proof of the allegation that in the way here proposed we can arrive at an organisation of knowledge which will form a real Unity. I consider it necessary to bring the study of this matter to an end by giving a glance, by way of comparison and criticism, at a philosophical movement of the present, the principles of which consist of a new conception of science, and an estimate thence derived of the history of our knowledge. This is *the Positivism of Comte.*

In the development of knowledge and science, Comte

distinguishes three stadia, not, it is true, occupying periods of time that are sharply separated from each other, but partly running on side by side, since the beginnings of the later are always to be found in the earlier; yet succeeding each other, in so far as they obtain the *predominance* in turn. The first stadium is the *Theological*, this again being divided into different stages, of which, however, only the stage of Christian Monotheism has still to be considered by us, Comte also recognising it as the chief. In this period knowledge assumes an absolute character, and it is no less true that a corresponding, absolute utilisation of it for the practical purposes of life (Astrology, Alchemy, etc.) is aimed at. And further, as the name indicates, knowledge is gathered up into a Unity under the idea of God. The *Metaphysical* stadium follows as the second, in which, it is true, the organisation of knowledge which is exhibited by Theology yields to destructive criticism, but yet the absolute character of it is maintained; only in place of the idea of God there have come the general notions of Metaphysics. Lastly, there follows the period of the *Positive Philosophy*, in which the relative character of our knowledge is seen and acknowledged; and accordingly, all questions which take us beyond our present experience of a real world being waived, no other than a positive knowledge of the world is sought, the knowledge which is founded on experience, in the sense, however, that it is by no means a narrow Empiricism which is advocated, but that the presentation of the sciences in a *deductive* form is everywhere sought as the completion of them.

Of these stadia, however, strictly speaking in Comte's own judgment only the first and the last, the Theological and the Positive, have seriously to be considered. The Metaphysical stadium has essentially a critical and preparative significance, allowing of the transition from the one to the other. The period of its predominance is that in which the organisation of knowledge exhibited by Theology, an organisation of which our philosopher always speaks with great respect, is *no longer* able to maintain its predominance, but in which the Positive Philosophy has *not yet* arrived at general recognition. And this judgment at all events, as it seems to me, we must adhere to; especially because the profound and influential Metaphysics of the old stamp likewise presented in its turn an organisation of knowledge formed on the lines of theology, though it was not that admitted by the Church; whereas that Metaphysic which renounces such organisation loses by so doing its universal significance apart from criticism, although it may act with fructifying effect on a group of positive sciences in the problems of which the metaphysician concerned is specially interested.

In the present age, then, the period of the *philosophie positive* is said to have appeared, Comte himself standing forth as its discoverer, its original founder, and its inspired prophet. But in his opinion, we have in that philosophy not merely an advance in the purely scientific or philosophical sphere, but at the same time a *turning-point in historical life* of an altogether universal and thorough-going significance. For he teaches that the three stadia of philosophical develop-

ment have three stages in the historical development of social life corresponding to them. Within the range of Christian chronology, these, briefly stated, are the ages of the Church, of the Revolution, and now of that arrangement of society again which is to be expected from the Positive Philosophy. What, therefore, he has to announce and to prepare the way for is a new arrangement of society, no less than a new science and philosophy. But in the estimate which is given of these three ages we have a repetition of what was said above of the judgment of Comte regarding the philosophical standpoints. Here, too, his sympathy is accorded to the Church and then to the positive arrangement of society, which he represents as the worldly and perfected antitype, as it were, of the organisation of the mediæval church. The Revolution with its ideals stands for him only as a necessary transition without independent value. But the whole system is based on the bold thought that in the historical condition of a nation at any given time, or say of a community of nations bound together by a common civilisation, the different factors must correspond. So it is said to have always been agreeably to historical experience *in its wide and general aspect;* and that, it is held, must be the end of the matter. It is impossible, therefore, to reform philosophy and for the rest to leave the old conditions as they were, and as little, of course, can the latter be improved without a renovation of philosophy. But while there is this general relation of inter-dependence, the centre of gravity lies more particularly in the Intellect. The progress of human things in general is

conditioned by progress in the intellectual sphere. A new philosophy does not spring from a new organisation of society, but conversely the latter springs from the former. Therefore, too, the salvation of the future is to be expected from the *philosophie positive*. The former principle of the necessary consistency of the particular factors of a historical condition is the fundamental law of Social Statics; the latter principle of the leading influence of the Intellect in historical progress is the fundamental law of Social Dynamics.

We do not do justice to Comte unless we pass judgment on his Positivism in the general and wide connection which has now been sketched. We have not to do with a new estimate of knowledge, which can be disposed of with some remarks about the basis it claims in the theory of cognition, but with a new and an undeniably imposing general theory, which must be tested as such. And we must not allow that theory to be hidden from us by the tiresome diffuseness of Comte's disquisitions, he having been no felicitous writer. The importance of his main theory must nevertheless be recognised. I add that although on the whole a failure, it still contains substantial elements of truth, and that it and the kindred views will not be refuted unless justice is done to the truth they contain.

Against the old organisation of knowledge exhibited by theology, Kant previously struck the decisive blow. Our agreement with Comte in his judgment regarding that organisation appears from all that precedes, and does not need to be set forth again at greater length. It was shown in the first Division that the conception

of Christian truth which answers to that organisation could not be maintained on Protestant ground; and in the first chapter of this Division we have proved in detail that the rationalistic and empirical explanation of the world, *i.e.* the scientific basal thought of the organisation in question, rests on an error. But it is also correct that all our certain knowledge is comprised in relative notions, and that science has to look for advancement only from positive investigation such as is based on experience, while that which goes beyond this is of evil. To defend this principle, and that too without advocating a narrow Empiricism in point of method, we too in our turn have found abundant opportunity in all that has preceded. Lastly, the law of Social Statics, as it is called by Comte, deserves every consideration; I mean the law that in a given state of society all the conditions are dependent on one another and must mutually correspond to each other—but here, of course, what was formerly made out in reference to the notion of "laws" must not be left out of view. A proof for this law, in the special sphere treated of by us, is furnished by the fact which has just been mentioned again, that Catholic dogma has not been able permanently to occupy the place of ecclesiastical doctrine in the wholly altered ecclesiastical organisation of Christian society existing among the Protestant nations. It stands or falls with the ecclesiastical organisation of Catholicism, in connection with which it originally appeared (I. p. 334).

But notwithstanding these correct views, the Positivism of Comte, *taken as a whole*, is radically a failure as a philosophy. And further, the faults and defects

of it, if I am right, can be traced back, every one of them, to *a fundamental error*, which is no other than the *old prejudice of the primary, and in the last resort decisive, significance for human things which is assigned to the Intellect.* This prejudice runs through the whole development of philosophy since Plato's time; in Germany, since the days of Kant and Schleiermacher, a truer perception has made way for itself alongside of it and in opposition to it; in Comte, on the other hand, we find it in full blossom. And then, under this general presupposition, even the correct insight which is gained by him turns out to the disadvantage of the highest and most substantial interests of humanity, whereas, with the old organisation of knowledge exhibited by theology, and even with Platonic Metaphysics, indeed, the latter can be made good. Let us try, then, in order to prove the correctness of this conclusion with regard to Positivism, to indicate the faults of it as briefly as possible, and to derive them from the prejudice which has been mentioned.

From that prejudice it follows, first of all, that the relative character of our knowledge is not thoroughly maintained after all as the facts require. It is maintained only in so far as Comte recognised the claim of the old Metaphysics to absolute knowledge to be erroneous, and contested it. On the other hand, he still ascribes to the relative knowledge which he retains an exaggerated value as before. Thus he can occasionally declare with sovereign contempt that what does not conform to general notions and laws cannot be an object of scientific knowledge either.

Certainly, as a matter of fact, it cannot; only, however, because our knowledge is never perfectly sufficient for the object, but always continues to be defective and charged with arbitrariness; but not as if that which does not conform to such knowledge, as comes to be the case according to him, did not really deserve to exist. Such conclusions are the *direct opposite* of a correct conception of science and of its *positive* problems. They adhere closely to the old prejudice in reference to the "laws" which science sets up. Of more importance still is the other fact, that the subordination of science, in the last resort, to the practical problems of the human race, is not enforced. And yet there is an alternative presented here. Either knowledge is our highest interest, and in that case the indestructible impulse to seek the Absolute and Unconditioned which exists in our minds forms a legitimate union with the impulse to seek knowledge; and by the creative power so arising in this faculty, we are in a position to attain, at least approximately, the goal of absolute knowledge. Or the Intellect has a secondary significance, as is certainly the case; and then the practical interest must be recognised as superior to it, and the whole of knowledge must be estimated accordingly, such being in fact the nature of the knowledge attainable by us. It does not do to deny the absolute character of knowledge, and yet to glorify knowledge as before. What results if that is attempted can be nothing but a mongrel which is unable to live.

Further, a false estimate of the theological organisation of knowledge condemned by Comte is rooted in

the same prejudice. There is throughout a failure to observe that there are *two* factors of our mental life which are combined in it into a unity; on the one hand, doubtless, Knowledge, but on the other religious Faith, which is rooted in Feeling. Now, if it is acknowledged to be right that the combination should be broken, because the one part, Knowledge, has outgrown the limits thereby fixed for it, and has no longer to look for furtherance as formerly from the combination but only for disadvantage, there *still remains the question* how the other part is circumstanced now, and how it can receive the peculiar rights which are due to it, and which are independent of Knowledge. Instead of considering that question, Comte treated this matter as if the intention had always been only to establish a suitable organisation of knowledge. True, he places that organisation parallel to the Church's organisation of social conditions, but he forgets the most important fact, which can alone combine the two together at all, religious faith, the emotional interest which seeks in that faith its satisfaction. The best proof of the allegation that we have here a *substantial omission*, is found in the fact that the founder of Positivism himself afterwards emphatically referred to the great significance of the *part affectif* in the human mind, and attempted to supplement the *philosophie positive* on that side. In respect to this attempt, he had no success certainly among his disciples. And no wonder, because he was able to do nothing better as the result of that discovery than invent a new religion and Church which could not be surpassed in point of repulsiveness. But at all

events the best proof of an omission on the part of the *philosophie positive* may be found in this fact.

Lastly, the same prejudice caused him to pronounce a false judgment on the development of History. The view that that development depends essentially on the advances of the intellect and of knowledge—an opinion which, as is well known, Buckle in his *History of Civilisation in England* also defends in the most extravagant manner—is only half the truth. No one, of course, will question the belief that intellectual progress is of the greatest significance, especially the belief that modern science has largely transformed our life, and that we owe to it the substantial promotion which our civilisation has gained. It is no less true that owing to it a good deal of superstition has been done away with among large classes of people. Astrology and Alchemy have vanished never to appear again; Astronomy and Chemistry move on lines which are justified by the results. On these points, therefore, there can be no doubt. But why has modern Physical Science succeeded in triumphing with such comparative speed, and in effecting such advances in civilised life? Only, to be sure, for the reason that it has merely had to overcome antiquated prejudices. These are no doubt obstinate enough, but yet they stand only in a somewhat remote relation to the Will, and are therefore conquerable. The real interest of the Will, *the Will to live* and prosper, has not opposed science, but has been its powerful ally. And for that reason, not because mankind at once obey the *right perception*, it has exercised such a thorough-going influence on the development of civilisation. But

now how does the case stand in this respect *in the social sphere?* Can it be seriously asserted, or may we venture with Comte to hope, that an improved Social Science will exercise a similar telling influence on Social practice ?

On this point we have the following remarks to make :—In the first place, Comte has an extravagantly high idea of the results generally which science is able to attain in this sphere. That error is connected with the above-mentioned false view regarding "laws," and flows from the same source as all the defects here treated. Certainly "Sociology" as a science ought to be bent on the ascertainment of the laws of social life and its development. But the fact that it has lagged behind the Physical Sciences is not merely due to the greater complication of the phenomena in its sphere of investigation, but is principally and *permanently* based on their peculiar nature, on the facts that here freedom has its scope, and that almost all the factors of the process are subjected to continued and often also sudden alterations, which can only be measured with difficulty, and frequently not at all. For these reasons there will never be so perfect a Sociology as Comte expects from the application of his method. Apart from that, right knowledge has quite a different *resistance* to overcome *in practice* in this sphere from what it has anywhere else. For in order to produce tenable conditions, it must, as Comte also assumes, *oppose* the Will as well as the limited knowledge of the great majority. It is therefore a foolish fancy to expect from an improvement of Social Science a new and perfect organisation of society. In

this expectation the *old* prejudice from which the *new* philosophy suffers comes to light as in nothing else. And then, too, how did the case really stand with regard to the relation of the two factors, knowledge organised according to the principles of theology and the ecclesiastical arrangement of society, in the former period, which Comte takes as his example in the matter of form? Was the latter, the supremacy of the Church, really a consequence of that arrangement of knowledge? Here we can speak consistently with the facts only of two collateral phenomena, which, running into each other, mutually supported and conditioned one another. And as to the point which is here more particularly concerned, we *must* indeed speak of a decided *preponderance of the practical element.* No one will answer the question on what the supremacy of the Church over mediæval society was based, by pointing to the organisation of knowledge at that time on the principles of theology. Instead of doing so, every one will chiefly recall the fact that the Church possessed a firm foundation for her earthly influence in the universal belief in her power over heaven and hell.

Furthermore, in regard specially to this last error which has been discussed, we must not leave the fact unnoticed that Comte was a Catholic, and was not able to appreciate the Reformation in its significance for universal history. Indeed, so little does he know it, that he sees in it only the bursting forth of the Metaphysical and critical age, and can call his fatherland happy because it made the transition directly and without intermediate stadia from Catholicism to the Revolution. If, instead, he had been really acquainted

with the Reformation, with Protestantism, he would have known that its core is a new conception and presentation of the *Christian Religion*, and that there are given in it the germs both of a new arrangement of society and of a further organisation of knowledge. It is the Christian Faith with which we are concerned even in these last, and with the fortunes *of that Faith* what we have to expect from the future in the way of renovation and improvement in each of these directions will be bound up. The circumstance that Comte as a Catholic was unable to give due consideration to this factor, was avenged by the fact that afterwards, when there dawned upon him the essential significance for human things claimed by Feeling, he himself came forward as the founder of a religion.

These remarks may suffice as a criticism of Positivism. I have been unwilling to suppress them, desiring to mark off as against Positivism the views developed by me, since at many points they touch that philosophical position. And, as was noticed at the outset, I considered this the place suited for the purpose, because here our object has been to arrive at a conclusion regarding the organisation of knowledge. Then, of course, it was inevitable that some things should be noticed at the same time that do not belong, strictly speaking, to the present connection. We return now to the proper subject of our inquiry.

It still remains for us to fix more particularly the character which must be possessed by the practical Idea that can be employed as the principle of philosophical speculation. The fact that it is a *prac-*

tical Idea means this much, that *Judgments of Value* determine the formation and acceptance of it. For if the distinction drawn between the theoretical and practical elements in our mental life is to have a clear and definite sense, it rests simply on the distinction between purely theoretical judgments and judgments of value. We speak, however, of *one* practical Idea and not of several, because even if there were several, these would after all have to be subordinated again to a supreme and guiding Idea. Consequently it would come to the same thing as if there were only *one* Idea.

Now, since there are three different forms again of Judgments of Value, there are in a purely abstract sense three things possible.[1] However, *the Æsthetic Ideas* may be left out of consideration from the first. For the circumstance that an æsthetic contemplation of the world has nothing to do with the highest knowledge of the world, does not require to be proved. Under all circumstances, such contemplation is only a subjective conception, which from the nature of it is perfectly indifferent with regard to the Cause and Purpose of the world. And nothing, therefore, can be inferred from it with reference to these questions. Consequently there are left over only the Moral and

[1] *Das Wesen der christlichen Religion*, p. 53. The Feeling which is quick within us we express in Judgments of Value ; these form one of the two classes into which all our simple Judgments are divided, which are either Theoretical (Ontological) or else Judgments of Value. The former indicate a condition of things with which we are somehow confronted ; the latter give expression to the attitude which we as living beings take up with reference to it. Again, Judgments of Value are of three different kinds, Natural, Moral, or Æsthetic. The first are concerned with weal and woe, advantages and pains ; the second, with what is good and bad ; the third, with what is beautiful and ugly.

the Natural Judgments of Value, Ethical Ideals and Advantages.

If Ethical Ideals, Moral Ideas, are looked at purely as such, it is true of them also that no highest knowledge can be derived from them. An Ethical Ideal ought to be realised; there ought to be a correspondence of the life to a Moral Idea—that, and nothing further, is what is found. Indeed, if one actually transfers himself to this sphere of contemplation, where only moral considerations purely as such are regarded, such an isolation of them must be the end of the matter. All else seems here to impair the purity of the Ideal.

Kant, as is well known, laid the greatest stress on the Moral point of view, and he had it very specially in his mind when he maintained the Primacy of Practical Reason. The fact that Practical Reason is autonomous, and sets up the Moral law in its incomparable majesty, was the fixed point from which he set out in developing his conclusions regarding Freedom, God, and Immortality: in that fact there lay for him the only possible proof of these. But then in the demonstration itself he supplemented the Moral point of view by the other consideration of *Happiness*. Finally, it is *the Idea of the Chief Good* from which those conclusions are derived, although the necessity of the Moral law and of the realisation of it is held to be the proper means of proof. Now Kant is not unfrequently blamed for having in this way tampered with Eudæmonism, after having previously in the most energetic manner rejected and combated it. Others defend him from

blame on this score, by attempting to show that Kant conceived the chief good which he is thinking of in an entirely Moral sense. There seems to me to be *no reason* for formulating a charge. In his going back here to the basis of the chief good and maintaining it at the critical point, I rather discern a proof of the power of Kant's genius. For, in fact, that is the only correct course. Only an Idea of the chief good is calculated to serve as the principle of a philosophy which is based on practice.

Whether every contradiction can be removed from Kant's utterances on the subject, is doubtless, in my opinion, questionable. As that is a purely historical question, we do not require to consider it further here. At all events, it is not right first to carry the isolation of the purely moral element to excess in the way that Kant does, and then by way of supplement abruptly to introduce the Eudæmonistic point of view after all. Certainly that isolation has its own rights, and is based on the nature of Moral experiences: that must be recognised even if we cannot regard the interpretation of it given by Kant as well founded. However, if it is taken as *absolute*, it becomes an abstraction which is not justified in presence of reality. In truth the position of matters is that Moral Ideals are developed in history in and through the Advantages which, in view of this connection, we call *Moral Advantages*. Therefore, also, if we are to understand the Moral life itself, the Idea of a chief good is exceedingly important—indeed, absolutely indispensable. If, therefore, Kant had conceived and understood the Moral life from the first in the connection in which we find it

in historical reality, he would in that case have been led without any abrupt transitions to the Idea of the chief good as the one which must form the principle of Practical Philosophy. For in that case it is derived from the true nature of the Moral Ideas themselves, if these are taken as the point of departure.

But that the Idea of the chief good is the one which is sought, can be demonstrated not merely in this *indirect* manner. It does not follow merely from the circumstance that Æsthetic and Moral Ideas fail us, or from the fact that the latter themselves point to the chief good beyond them. Rather is it chiefly proved, and that in a direct and positive manner, by the circumstance that *from the nature of it* the Idea of the chief good is adapted to serve as the principle of the highest knowledge. Or, to express the matter differently, such knowledge can be derived from it. For supposing an Idea of the kind is proved to be valid, that it has come in whatever way to be a conviction that this chief good will and must be realised, it follows also that the Cause and Purpose of the world must be of a nature consistent with this Idea. The realisation of the chief good must itself in that case somehow be conceived as the Purpose of the world, as an integral part of it; and if so, then the world must also have been designed from its origin onwards for the realisation of it. In the matter of a chief good, we are dealing not merely with our subjective contemplation of the world, or with the fulfilment of a duty which depends, in that aspect of it *that falls to be considered by the Moral judgment*, only on mental conditions; we are dealing with a *state of reality outside us as well*,

as in us, a state in which the chief good—Life and Blessedness—is given as a fact. The real existing world must be of such a nature that the chief good can be realised—the notion of reality being taken in the precise meaning which was defined at the commencement, according to which all is real which forms part of the conditions of our life. We say therefore that *the highest knowledge has to be ascertained on the basis of an Idea of the chief good, that Idea having previously been proved to be valid itself.* And the Apologetic problem of Theology can only consist in proving the Christian Idea of the chief good to be the rational, the only and absolutely valid, Idea.

We have distinguished between two kinds of knowledge. On the one hand, there is the knowledge of the Understanding, which has its sole law in the facts; on the other hand, the knowledge of Reason, which, as can now be said more definitely, has as its principle an Idea of the chief good. In how far the two forms of knowledge can yet be combined with each other in an organisation which forms a Unity, has likewise been shown. Here we direct our view once more to the difference. For if I am right, a surprising fact in the present condition of philosophical investigation can be explained by it.

Every one who troubles himself with philosophical matters knows at the present day what significance *the Theory of Knowledge* possesses for philosophy. And in no respect is there reason to complain that that question is neglected. On the contrary, on all sides the greatest attention is devoted to it. With more earnestness almost than at any time that subject

has been elaborated in the period from Kant down to the present. Scarcely a year passes in which we are not presented with a new Theory of Knowledge—if there is only *one*. It almost appears as if at present a kind of Scholasticism was developed in this sphere—I mean a scientific study in which many a one who takes part in it does not make facts themselves the object of his inquiry; but rather on the basis of existing theories offers a new combination of elements which as a rule recur. But what is surprising is, that notwithstanding this earnest and universal treatment of the problem, there is *no agreement worthy of the name* even yet arrived at. It is true those who are occupied with it are collected in groups, but these groups often part company almost at the first step. Now the fact could, of course, be pointed to, that that is nothing new. The Theory of Knowledge, it may be said, deals simply with the basal question of philosophy; and it is an old story, and even an old complaint, that we find in philosophy less than in any other science a *continuity* of development and thinkers working conjointly. Yet nothing is explained by that. For the surprising fact continues to be just this, that philosophy is in such a position. And if our discussion affords us a means of explaining the failure of the attempts to come to an agreement respecting the Theory of Knowledge, perhaps from the position gained there will also fall some light on the more general fact itself which has been last mentioned.

It is possible in the style of a common scientific discussion, one which bears upon an actually existing object having the same characteristics for all observers,

and which allows of joint work, to investigate the mode of cognition with which the Understanding is concerned and the knowledge thereby acquired. We have instituted such an inquiry in the first chapter. Not, of course, as if all would now have to arrive without hesitation at the same results. That is still a question by itself, and here just as little as in other scientific discussions is it to be settled antecedently. Only this much is asserted, that under these circumstances joint work is possible, such as affords a prospect of agreement, and allows at least a stretch of the way to be traversed by a collective body. Only then, of course, such an inquiry must be kept within the limits observed by us. That is, *it has always a relative and provisional character*. On the other hand, if we are dealing with the highest knowledge, with that of Reason, that which has as its principle an Idea of the chief good, it leads to nothing in that case, if we analyse the process of knowledge; in that case the principal point is that the right and the absolute Idea of the chief good must be established. And that can never be done without the personal conviction, the mental freedom, of the investigator being concerned as one element in the act, in the manner previously described (p. 195).

Commonly, however, no notice is taken of the conditions under which the knowledge of Reason, and therefore the highest knowledge, is placed. *Merely* by means of the Theory of Knowledge as such, by the investigation of the process, it is supposed to be possible to discover that way to the highest knowledge which is binding for all. *But that procedure*

does not lead to the issue. In this matter we have to do not with a goal which can be reached by means of a purely objective discussion, but with a decision in which the mental freedom of the investigator, *his* idea of the chief good, is concerned. Nevertheless, every one shapes his course as if an objective inquiry and nothing else but that were involved. But no wonder, in that case, though the endless discussions bearing on the Theory of Knowledge lead to no result, to no agreement and common understanding. The Theory of Knowledge is rather the ground on which the various philosophical systems fight out their battle, which they do in such wise that every one of them gives out that it rests on considerations drawn from the Theory of Knowledge, although the real motives of all of them lie and *must lie* not in that, but elsewhere altogether. The correct course is to realise clearly this position of matters, to restrict the Theory of Knowledge to the limits within which there is a possible (and an indispensable) objective agreement with regard to common knowledge, and to seek the decision as to the highest knowledge in a comprehensive discussion such as takes into consideration *all the factors* of our mental and historical life.

Is that, however, properly speaking, anything new? Does not every circumspect investigator admit, must he not admit, that in philosophy—consistently with the central position which it assumes, not merely in respect to our knowledge, but in respect to our whole civilised life—there has always been such an element of personal conviction implicated in a conspicuous degree? Should it be so difficult to perceive that it is

not otherwise even at this day, and to rid oneself of the illusion that it ever could come to be otherwise? As it seems to me, it is only necessary to open one's eyes to know and admit that. If this position of matters were generally known and recognised, this at least would be gained, that in this important concern there might come to be a statement of the question which would be more correct in point of method, and that the prospect of a common understanding would necessarily improve considerably.

The Theory of Knowledge, I now therefore repeat, has, so far as common knowledge and strictly scientific investigation are concerned, only very slight significance or none at all. For there is no difference in anything connected with them whether it takes one form or another. The significance of the Theory of Knowledge consists in the fact that in it we seek *the way to the highest knowledge*. But if it is to answer this purpose, it must not hold that as a mere analysis of the process of knowledge it accomplishes everything. This inquiry can only form *one* element, and that too, although an important one, *not* the most important element of the whole. The most important point is an agreement as to the chief good. It is, moreover, only in this wider connection that *knowledge itself* can be rightly judged and appreciated in respect to its significance.

In strictness the conditions are now herewith completely established by which the proof of Christianity has to be guided. It would therefore be possible to pass now to that proof itself. But it is clear that the main portion of the proof, as it has to be presented

here, lies in the method, or more precisely in the proof for the correctness of the method, which we employ. Hence I take occasion to devote a further study to this question. For I think we have now the means in hand for *completely* explaining the prevailing methods and conclusively showing what is erroneous in them. It is implied by the nature of the case that as we do so the question of the Theory of Knowledge will again be mentioned. At the same time, we shall thus find occasion to bring to a close some trains of thought which were taken up in the previous chapters, but have not yet found a settlement.

CHAPTER III.

CRITICISM OF THE TRADITIONAL SPECULATIVE METHOD.

Theoretical Philosophy the product of a false union of the knowledge of the Understanding and Rational Speculation—The consequences of that combination for Science and for the highest Knowledge—The false statement of the question thereby occasioned in the fundamental problems of Philosophy.

It may seem superfluous to make the traditional method of theoretical philosophy once more matter for a critical discussion. Is there not enough on this head in what was set forth in the previous chapter, and derived from the preceding study of the subject of Knowledge? I think not. At that earlier stage it was made clear (p. 173) that theoretical philosophy has a *character peculiar to itself*, in virtue of which it is distinguished in particular from common Rationalism. But yet, to begin with, the same arguments had to be employed to drive both of them out of the field. This peculiarity of the speculative method in the narrower sense has not yet, therefore, been finally dealt with. On the other hand, criticism is not complete so long as it has been able to oppose what I might call one of the *Great Powers of the intellectual order*, as the Idealistic Philosophy in its traditional form is, with nothing more than a bare denial, however well grounded it may be. We shall only be entitled to describe it as complete if we

succeed in grasping the method criticised, in separating the *truth* and error in it, and showing that it is possible *to assert the former* without yielding to the latter. Consequently, there is still a problem to be solved, if a sufficient account is to be given of the reason why we do not employ for our present purpose the traditional Idealistic Philosophy, which has so long been held to be the only possible armoury providing for Apologetic ventures.

Now, the first question which confronts us here is the question, *In what does that peculiarity of the speculative method consist?* It has already been mentioned. It is based on the presupposition that there is a creative function inherent in human thought; that in the human mind there slumbers the power of extending our knowledge beyond all experience, and that it only requires to be awakened by intercourse with things; that to the so-called Laws of Thought there accrues a supernatural significance. Undoubtedly closer examination shows that common Rationalism also rests on that same presupposition. One might therefore demur to the declaration that that is a peculiarity of the speculative method in the narrower sense. The fact is, however, that the intentional *accentuation* of this side of the philosophical problem *and the concession of precedence to it* have from the first been *characteristic of speculative thought properly so called.* And whatever judgment one may pass as to the relation of the two methods to each other, at all events this is that peculiarity of traditional Idealism which we have not yet disposed of. It is no less true that from the nature of the case we require to look for this peculiarity where

it is most plainly apparent, and that is in speculation proper.

We must not, however, seek the source of this presupposition or conviction in connection with the work of science itself. There is nothing that justifies it in the results of science. Its results as a whole are founded rather on the investigation of the facts with which *experience* makes us acquainted, with which it alone can make us acquainted. Consequently the source of the view in question must be sought elsewhere. It has pushed its way, as it were, into knowledge and science from another province of our mental life. And the results of the previous chapter at once lead to the conjecture that it is *Reason* with its needs and its method that thus encroaches on the rights of the Understanding; or, to express the point more correctly, that the claims of speculative thought rest on a false combination of the knowledge of the Understanding and that of Reason. At least we have acknowledged that there is no correct and thorough maintenance of the distinction and combination of these two forms of our knowledge, and that other evils in the development of philosophical thought are explained by that fact. And that observation prompts the conjecture just expressed.

It is, however, more than a mere conjecture. That can be proved by referring to *History*. For, since philosophical speculation is itself a historical fact, it can as such be made matter for an objective inquiry, can be examined with respect to its origin and principle. And if that is done, it is found that it is in that position as a matter of fact which was just stated by way of con-

jecture. We intend in the first instance to try to prove this assertion itself, without taking into consideration the truth and untruth of the speculative principle. Then it will not be difficult, in the second place, to break up the combination which is to be found at bottom as being erroneous.

What has to be proved is therefore that the traditional speculative method has arisen from a combination of the knowledge of the Understanding with that of Reason. Our opinion, still more exactly stated, is that the claim of this speculative thought to be able to generate truth by virtue of a creative faculty inherent in it, has its source in a definite idea of the chief good, viz. in the idea that man has to seek, and that he can find, his *chief good* or his blessedness in *Knowledge*. That can be called a peculiar combination of the knowledge of Reason with that of the Understanding, on the ground that the chief good is transferred in this way to the sphere of knowledge. The proof of this derivation lies, however, in the fact that the idea just mentioned is the principle of Platonism, and that it is not merely the case that the point of departure of Western speculation as a whole is found in Platonism, but that the latter has, moreover, exercised a determinative influence on all later systems of speculative philosophy.

Here we recall what was previously said regarding the Platonic philosophy, when we were concerned with recognising in it an important factor in the process of the construction of dogma in the Christian Church (I. p. 42). The principle referred to has already been set forth at length at that stage, and followed out to its

consequences. One of these consequences is, that religious satisfaction is sought in knowledge, and that moral tasks, properly so called, which have to do with active life in the world, have a subordinate position assigned to them. But there follows in particular from that principle an estimate of man, according to which knowledge is the highest thing in him, and his worth and dignity rest on the powers of his mind which operate in this direction. That follows by virtue of a connection which may also be observed elsewhere, and which can be described as necessary because it is founded on the nature of the case. On my idea of the chief good depends what characteristic it is in which I see the superiority of man over the other creatures, and what I value most highly in him, or conversely: on this latter judgment depends my idea of the chief good. So is it in general, and so also here. If, therefore, the peculiarity of speculative philosophy and of its method consists in the belief in the supernatural powers of human Reason that was spoken of, that has no other source whatever except this Platonic idea of the chief good. The very same thing can also be proved by the circumstance that the denial of the belief in question is not refuted by the representatives of it, but is wont to be rejected as something horrible, with all the moral indignation which is only in place where we believe our highest possessions to be in danger.

It is due, however, to the importance of the subject that we should dwell somewhat longer on this connection. And we must do so too in such wise that along with Platonism itself, the further historical develop-

ment of speculative philosophy is also kept in view. This task is facilitated for me by the learned and instructive work of Laas on *Idealism and Positivism*, to the first Book of which I owe information which I have desiderated as to many connecting links in the History of Philosophy.[1]

Laas attempts to establish the *leading motives of Platonic Idealism*, in order then to follow up every one of them by itself in its after-effect throughout the history of philosophical thought. He lays down five of them. As the *first* he mentions (p. 98) "the exaggerated esteem for and the imitation, premature and untrue to fact, of the example of strictly concatenated (syllogistic) reasoning afforded by Mathematics." In Aristotle, this esteem is found in full flower, although with him it has not yet led to empty formalism. Spinoza, whether he derived it through intermediaries from Plato, or originally engendered it once more in his own mind, yields to it so far that he presents his Metaphysics in formulæ which are shaped after the model of Mathematics; Kant, too, more than once gives evidence of his respect for Mathematics as the type of a completed science, and ranks it high above all merely empirical knowledge (p. 105 ff.). The *second* motive is the impulse to rise to the Unconditioned or Absolute, the need felt for resting everything in the last resort on absolute principles, if possible on one single notion or proposition which itself requires no proof (p. 100). And wherever we look in Idealistic philosophy, from Aristotle down to Schelling and Hegel, we find this principle in operation. Thus

[1] Ernst Laas, *Idealismus und Positivismus*, i., Berlin, 1879.

Aristotle mounts above all (formal) principles to the last and highest, the *principium identitatis* and *contradictionis*, and in Theology represents the nature of God, the unmoved Mover of all things, the Energy that thinks itself, as that on which heaven and all nature depend. The disciples of Wolff strove to trace back the principle of Sufficient Reason to the principle of Identity, in order to have only *one* supreme principle. Kant is always consistent in his devotion to the Unconditioned, in his reverence for it: in the Critical Philosophy the regard for it only assumes another form. And in the Post-Kantian Philosophy, all that came before rushes together to form as it were a ravishing symphony of Absolute Knowledge (p. 115 ff.). With this is associated as the *third* feature of the Platonic type, the assumption that for existence as well as for our action, there are in the Reason regulative principles which give to all sensuous existence and effort, form and direction, by which alone all that is real is recognisable, and by which alone all that is willed becomes good (p. 101). That is the *a priori* feature which runs through the whole Idealistic philosophy (theoretical as well as practical) from Aristotle down to the present; even Herbart, with all his soberness and circumspection, yielded to it in his Metaphysics (p. 126 ff.). Kindred with this again is the *fourth* motive, the motive of Spontaneity, or the doctrine that there is in us along with the passive side of our nature, that which is conditioned by sense, a higher side which is manifested —theoretically as well as practically—in active works (p. 101). Here the freedom of the Will is rooted, but also the creative power of the Intellect. Especially

Descartes, then again in his own way Kant, and after him, above all, Fichte, suffered themselves to be guided to a large extent by this motive, while in Hegel, in place of the overt acts of the Ego, there comes the spontaneous movement of the Notion (p. 150 ff.). In the *fifth* and last place, there has to be named the transcendent or supersensuous motive, the wistful faith that the spiritual nature of man, which acts spontaneously in thinking and working, has another home than this earth, pointing beyond it to an Intelligible world of higher value and a life to come (p. 102). Besides Plato, on whose thought this motive principally exercised an important influence, no other again enforced it so plainly and so positively as Kant (p. 167 ff.).

It is quite understood, as a matter of course, that this attempt to disentangle the different motives and to study them in isolation, is made only from the interest felt in following out Platonic Idealism as completely as possible, in all its aspects, through the motley texture of doctrinal opinions which the history of philosophy shows us. Laas himself always emphasises anew the affinity and the connection of the particular motives; indeed, he does not omit the attempt to gather them together into a unity, since he represents one of them —the inclination for the Unconditioned—as the dominating motive, from which the others can be derived. That same path is the one we would like to pursue, in order to trace Platonic Idealism and all the after-effects connected with it to its ultimate and really governing basal thought.

In the first place, then, the second and fifth motives

at all events, the inclination for the Unconditioned and the wistful faith in an Intelligible world in which lies the supersensuous destination of man, stand in very close proximity to one another. The difference lies not so much in the motives themselves, as in the spheres of mental life in which they respectively come to be manifested. In the case of the last named, this sphere is that of Feeling, with the faith and hope of the human soul which are thence derived and which stretch beyond the existing world. And the inclination for the Unconditioned is nothing but the counterpart of this impulse in the sphere of *Thought and Knowledge*. But if we ask to what faculty it originally belongs, the answer must be that it is derived from the Will. In the knowledge of the Understanding there is absolutely nothing that points beyond the existing world of facts, of which alone there can be knowledge. Strictly speaking, the Unconditioned can be an object of *knowledge* only in so far as we can know that in most men an inclination, a longing, is roused to get beyond this world of the Conditioned and changeable. The inclination for the Unconditioned is not rooted in any form of Knowledge, but in the Will, in Feeling. And farther, it is the longing for a chief good above the world that is roused in it. An unconditional, *i.e.* a perfect and definitive satisfaction of the Will—that is the original meaning, and the *positive* meaning, directly intelligible to every one, which is connected with the words Unconditioned, Absolute, and all kindred words. Or if it is not this, they have no positive meaning at all, but simply a negative meaning, since experience always acquaints us only with relative magnitudes. But if we

are confronted with the alternative of having, on the one hand, to explain a phenomenon which is widely prevalent in man's mental life, as one which is devoid of positive meaning, or, on the other, to refer it to a source otherwise well known and thoroughly adequate to it, although in many cases apparently remote, there can be no doubt about the decision. Every one will and must conclude that the latter is the only correct course. The inclination for the Unconditioned, as it asserts itself in the Intellectual sphere, is rooted in the practical longing which is kindred to it, in the desire for a chief good, in religious craving. It has taken form in the Intellectual sphere for the reason that Greek philosophy, after the example of Plato, sought the chief good in Knowledge. And wherever in later times it has been or still is sought there, the consequence is the same. Where, therefore, the Unconditioned is spoken of, the language must be referred to this combination as its original source.

Further, the third and the fourth motives are likewise strictly cognate, Laas too describing them in his derivation as kindred and homogeneous. By whatever general notion we designate the seat where the regulative principles of Reason arise, whether we call it Reason or Mind, or whatever name we give it, at all events there must be a word which is, on the other hand, the name for our mental faculty and power, and for Thought and Knowledge too in particular. Then it is implied by that that these regulative principles must be put in some relation or other to the overt acts of the "higher" Ego. That relation, no doubt, can be variously conceived, without, however, its *essential*

character and the homogeneousness itself being questioned in consequence. Two things principally are possible. On the one hand, the principles of Reason are viewed as a direct issue of those overt mental acts of the Ego. On the other hand, they are referred to a Supreme Being, to God; and the active generation of them in man is explained as being due to his having a nature which is kindred with God; or they are held to be innate in him, as the case may be, part of what has been bestowed by God. In truth, the difference which thus results is not great. For even in the former case it is not really the individual Reason of the particular person that is conceived as the originator of the principles, but Reason, Spirit in general—in short, something that must always be conceived as exalted in rank, as Divine. And, in the second case, too, we become acquainted with the Divine legislation concerned by looking to our *own* minds, and we form our ideas of the nature of God according to what we discover here. The two motives, therefore, are most strictly homogeneous. Again, the motive which Laas mentions in the first place, the preference for Mathematics and syllogistic reasoning, may simply be regarded as an outcome of this combination of the third and fourth. Mathematics, with its deductive method, appears as the unique and classic model of a science which develops all its propositions from first principles founded on Reason itself, and not derived from experience. If, now, all science and philosophy are looked at from this point of view, the natural consequence is that Mathematics is imitated, that scientific demonstration and philosophic method are accounted more

perfect the more they approximate toward this model.

There are essentially two motives, therefore, to which those five laid down by Laas may be reduced: the inclination for the transcendent Absolute, and the belief in an original legislative power of Reason, of which Mathematics appears as the practical proof. But these are also the proper fundamental motives not merely of Platonism, but of speculative philosophy as a whole down to the present day. The question is whether these two again can be combined into a unity, and in what way this is done.

Now we can only succeed in this aim if we clearly realise first of all how the former is based on the idea of the chief good, *i.e.* on a definite conception of that idea, the conception of it according to which man has to seek and is able to find his blessedness in Knowledge. And that that is the true derivation I have already shown above. But then it follows at once that the motive named in the second place is nothing but the natural consequence of the first, or its presupposition as the case may be. Of this too we have already spoken. What combines the two together is the essential connection between a definite idea of the chief good and the estimate which is made of man—his estimate of self in the first instance, but then, further, the general judgment as to what distinguishes man, as to the ground on which his worth and dignity rest. The two things correspond to each other, and they must correspond to each other, as soon as order and connection prevail in one's thought as a whole. If, therefore, man seeks the chief good or his blessedness

in any form of Knowledge, he will also believe in the supernatural power and significance of Reason, of the laws that have to be developed out of it. The assertion may therefore be repeated, that in this peculiar idea of the chief good, in the combination of Understanding and Reason derived from it, is to be found the *fundamental motive of speculative philosophy reduced to a unity.*

We require, however, to add some remarks by way of supplement to what has been said. We must first and chiefly recall the fact that in a philosophy which is guided simply by the motives explained above, neither the specifically scientific interest in an exact and complete knowledge of things, nor the specifically moral interest in active life in the world, sufficiently obtains its rights (I. p. 44). But it is understood as a matter of course, that not merely the philosophers of antiquity, but the later representatives of speculative philosophy as well, always show themselves more or less affected by those interests also, in their distinctive character. And that must always be kept in view in the interpretation of the development of philosophy. These interests are the other factor which has co-operated from the first with the fundamental motive that was spoken of, in originating the particular definite speculative systems. They are the matter out of which the dominant thought has from time to time formed each system. We dwell for a moment on this subject, and look first at the moral interest.

In the moral ideals formed in history there is developed, quite *independently of the Idealistic philosophy*, a tendency that seems to make an advance

towards it. This tendency is found, on the one hand, in the unconditional character of the moral law, in the fact that the peculiar feeling of obligation suffers no contradiction; on the other hand, in the apparently spontaneous origin of the moral laws in us, of which popular instruction itself is wont to treat under the title of the *awakening* conscience. What we have here seems an advance made towards the Idealistic philosophy, because each of the phenomena can be interpreted as a confirmation of the view that our practical moral life is based on regulative principles derived from the Reason itself. Therefore, too, we have met with such an assumption above as an element of speculative philosophy. Of course it is the case in truth that the facts of the moral life do not demand such an explanation, and do not, therefore, serve to support this philosophical school, but that one must be convinced on other grounds of the right of speculation, in order to regard such a derivation of moral phenomena as established. However, the points of contact, which as a matter of fact are furnished here in any case, involve the effect that the moral interests themselves do not necessarily suffer in this connection, but seem to have in it an actual guarantee of their peculiar dignity. Indeed, so true is it that this combination forms one of the prevailing habits of thought down to this day, that the denial of it is wont to be met with the usual charges of Scepticism, Materialism, etc.

With regard to this matter, however, it must not be forgotten that in the last resort the moral interests are not identified with that combination from which springs the fundamental motive of speculative philosophy.

There is rather something involved in that combination, which, as soon as it is sufficiently developed, may, and indeed must, become hurtful to the strictly moral interests. And, again, if these are fully maintained, the fundamental motive of speculation cannot be asserted in its purity.

If one seeks the basis of his ideal of life in speculative philosophy, then the more energetically and consistently he carries out the speculative principle, the result will all the less belie its affinity with the contemplative, religious, even the monkish, ideal. And further, that holds good by no means simply where the Christian and ecclesiastical motives of Catholicism are at the same time operative. It also holds good with regard to the representatives of speculative philosophy as such. We need only think of Spinoza and of the intellectual love to God which he praises as the highest. But where this course is adopted, in whatever form, it is always prejudicial to the interests which are distinctively moral, the true theatre for which is active life in the world. And conversely, where these, the strictly moral interests, preponderate in the case of a speculative philosopher, and are energetically asserted in his system, this has as its consequence a modification of that system such as cannot be explained by its leading principle. For that principle assigns to the moral life the second place.

Something similar must also be said of the distinctively theoretical or *scientific* interest which we have in the knowledge of things. Indeed, this may almost be said to lie nearer the heart of the philosopher as such than the moral interest itself. It must some-

how assert itself in him, and he must somehow seek to do justice to it. However persistently he may adhere in the last resort to the speculative method, and obtain his conclusions deductively from principles, he cannot really get rid of the influence of the scientific knowledge of the world existing in his time, and he can never want to do so either. Although Plato despised the common knowledge contained in figurative thought, soon quite a different position was taken up by Aristotle. Above all, a modern philosopher, at whose disposal a much richer and more comprehensive knowledge of the world is placed by science, cannot think of such depreciation without making havoc of science, and no one does think of it. And in scientific research too (as in the moral life), there is something offered that seems to furnish an advance towards the Idealistic philosophy. For that may be said of all those grounds which, as we previously saw (p. 120), are brought forward in support of the necessary and *a priori* character of our knowledge. Only here too, what is actually offered contains nothing that can serve as the proof of the philosophical principle; the justification of that principle is rather the presupposition required for a corresponding estimate of the facts. But it is manifest how important a factor in the development of philosophy this contact with positive science is, and what alterations in the philosophical systems must be produced by it, when we consider the progress of science and the corresponding change in their results, even if the first principle remains the same. We cannot, therefore, insist say on this great variety as conflicting with the derivation attempted above of

all speculative systems from a common fundamental motive. If we consider only the influence of advancing science, and furthermore the differences in the social relations as well as in the temperament of the investigator, viz. how he is inclined pre-eminently to the contemplative or to the active ideal of life, how he is of a pessimistic or an optimistic temper, there is a full account given as far as could ever be considered necessary of this manifold variety.

Then, too, the fact may here be recalled, that the empirical method of explaining the world is essentially akin to the speculative method. We found that in order to be valid, the former presupposes as well as the latter a creative power in the laws of thought. Only in the case of the former it is a *principle* from the first to take *experience* also into consideration, and to found the system mainly on experience. It thus, in a certain sense, occupies an intermediate position between positive science, which draws on experience, and a speculative philosophy, which obtains its conclusions deductively. Indeed, who would draw a sharp line between the two methods generally, and then decide in every instance whether a definite system belongs to the one side or the other? Who would do so at this day especially, when every one appeals in part, at least incidentally, to experience? But all the more surely is there a means supplied by which science proper exercises its modifying influence on the philosophical systems, a bridge by which the knowledge of the world which exists at any time passes over into the speculative system, and the principle of the speculative method passes into know-

ledge and science. There a reciprocal action takes place. For that very reason, too, since science belongs to the side of the Understanding, I said from the first that in theoretical speculation we have a *peculiar combination of the knowledge of the Understanding with that of Reason.*

However, the picture of the Idealistic Philosophy of tradition and of the motives which are operative in it, would not be complete, if a further motive hitherto not expressly mentioned were not stated, one which we do not meet with among those developed out of Platonism by Laas. I mean the attempt to explain the world by referring all that happens to the processes known to man from his own inner experience. In reality, that is the oldest philosophy there is, because it is based on the naïve principle of knowledge and explanation which is most readily employed by every person. We have also previously seen that we never completely get over certain remaining effects of this mode of view even in the most exact science. However, I do not think of that at present, but of technical philosophical explanations, which, like those of Leibnitz, say, or recently of Lotze, point to a system of Monads that think, or at least have sensation, as the ultimate ground of all existence. For in these the impulse to explain everything is operative which, inasmuch as explaining really means nothing but referring the unknown to the known, and inasmuch as our own inner life is what is best known to us in the last resort, leads quite naturally to the importation of the latter into Nature.

Perhaps it would be no hopeless undertaking to bring this motive of Idealistic speculation into an organic and essential relation to the *fundamental motive* of it which has just been set forth. At least kindred features may be pointed out. Thus, *e.g.*, no one will doubt that the Panlogism of Hegel is properly a speculative philosophy. In it, indeed, that hypostatising and deifying of the Logical process which follows from the fundamental motive of speculation is an absolute principle. But are not the laws of all that exists, and so what exists itself, also referred by it to the Logical process as we know it from our own human thought? And then, further, is there not something implied in that which is akin to that method of explanation which has just been mentioned? However, it seems to me, after all, to be more correct on the whole to bring forward this motive as an additional one along with the others, as one which likewise co-operates in some degree. It will be possible to distinguish the particular systems principally by asking whether it is positive science, or the speculative impulse, or the last-mentioned attempt at explanation, that exercises the preponderating influence in them.

And now with these observations our first task has been discharged. It has been shown how and why the Idealistic philosophy in its traditional form rests on a peculiar co-operation of Understanding and Reason. It now remains for us to prove the combination which is found at bottom to be *erroneous.*

In the first place, however, we must again point

out by the way that the reference of occurrences in nature to such processes as we know from our inner experience cannot amount to a real explanation such as the case requires. A reference of the kind rather stands in contradiction with the facts of experience. For nothing is more certain to us immediately than that lifeless objects are something different from ourselves, that they do *not* have sensation, and do not think, will, or feel. On the other hand, it is perfectly obvious how people come to make these attempts at explanation. If we take a general view of the matter, it is implied by the nature of the undertaking itself, a fact which has already been touched upon, that as soon as explanation is held to be the principal object of endeavour, such a result must be the issue. And if we look more closely at the matter, the process that goes on is this. In the first place, we freely import our own nature into things: in that fact is rooted the common idea of the *efficient* cause. Then even after the naïve conception has passed into the background and been laid aside, we continue to speak of Causes and Effects. But now the reflection comes in that in reality we know only of a more or less regular succession of changes in time, and nothing, on the other hand, of an internal bond which connects occurrences with each other. The correct course is to rest satisfied with this, because we have arrived here at a limit to our *knowledge*. If one *will* not do so, if one *will* explain at all hazards, the only course that remains is to restore in a scientific form the naïve explanation given at the commencement, and somehow to utilise

the *inner* experience of man as the means of explanation. But by this means there is nothing gained except that the imagination arbitrarily enough creates a mythological world of shadows behind the real world of our experience. That result is absolutely without foundation on fact. Therefore, too, we do not stop longer here, but look at the basal motive of speculation itself.

We find, as may readily be conceived, no objection to the view that it is founded on an idea of the chief good. We have formerly established the truth that such an idea is what is indicated to us as the principle of the knowledge of Reason, of the speculative explanation of the world thence derived. If this and nothing else is the nature of theoretical speculation too, we can see in that fact only *an exceedingly important confirmation of the principle discovered in the previous chapter*. It is thereby shown that this principle is *nothing new*, but has at all times been valid *as a matter of fact*. What we demur to is the *application* which the principle finds here, the chief good being transferred to the sphere of knowledge. True, we have not at present to do with that fact in itself. We do not yet inquire here regarding the correct idea of the chief good, the idea which answers to Reason. Therefore, too, it is not yet the place for our critical examination of the possible conceptions of that idea. Here our objection applies in the first instance to the mode in which the combination is introduced and is wont to be established, to the fact that in theoretical speculation the correct principle is perverted into a false estimate of knowledge. For the representatives

of that speculation are by no means conscious of the fact that their thought is based on an idea of the chief good. Much less still is their procedure guided by that consideration. They rather think they are justified in it on the ground of what every person finds in himself, and must recognise, as the nature of the process of knowledge in man. Doubt as to that capacity of Reason which is assumed by them is simply ascribed to a practical defect in the doubter. But the question of the chief good is regarded as settled by the fact that, of course, knowledge—ostensibly—opens up the way to the highest goal of man. That is a real amalgamation of truth and error. It finds its expression in the false estimate which is given of knowledge. And it is this error that we have to direct our attention to for the present.

Yet no further special analysis of it will be required. The two first chapters have already supplied all that is necessary for its refutation. It is self-evident that the claim which theoretical speculation puts forward is not yet proved by the fact that it is put forward. So regarded, it is an axiom which is presupposed as valid without proof. It cannot be refuted, because it has no grounds to adduce in support of itself. Or at least it can only be refuted when it is referred to the correct principle, and when it is shown how it rests on an erroneous application of that principle — an object which has partly been accomplished already by the derivation given above, and partly belongs to the discussion of the next chapter on the idea of the chief good which

answers to Reason. Here we can only concern ourselves with any establishment of the claim which may be sought from the nature of theoretical knowledge as such. And then, as to that, it has been sufficiently proved in the first chapter that this knowledge is in truth of quite a different character. It is not the case that what is actually given as the nature of this knowledge in every one's experience, and is imposed on every one, can support the claim of theoretical speculation, but contrariwise: the conception of this knowledge which is employed as a proof of that claim has itself the validity of the speculative principle as its presupposition. There is nothing more there to prove or to refute.

But perhaps it will be said that in the Theory of Knowledge lies the proof of the claim of theoretical speculation, that every such system lays the foundation for its structure by means of discussions on the Theory of Knowledge, and that the important matter is to refute what is enforced in that regard. In that way we would next be brought face to face with an absolutely immeasurable task—a task, indeed, the prolongation of which never ceases, since every year in turn brings to light new Theories of Knowledge. However, we shall probably be permitted, in the face of such a demand, to fall back on what was set forth at the close of the preceding chapter in reference to the whole subject. He who considers the great variety of these theories, he again who takes into consideration that every such theory stands in an organic and essential connection with the presuppositions of the particular speculative system based upon it, has every

reason to reflect whether the case is not the reverse of what it seems at first to be. I mean, whether, instead of the Theory of Knowledge supporting the system, the system has not rather generated the Theory of Knowledge. Indeed, I almost suspect that every one concerned will not be disinclined to admit this with reference to all others—his own theory alone excepted. But then he cannot wonder if an impartial observer declines to make such an exception, since he cannot share the natural preference of the author specified for the system of his choice. Instead, therefore, of beginning such a task as a whole, or only in part, let us appeal to the observations at p. 224, which it is superfluous to repeat here.

To sum up, we have thus to say regarding theoretical speculation, that it has been formed, as it were, by the confluence of the correct principle of the chief good as the principle of all speculative philosophy and a false view of the nature of theoretical knowledge. What is required is that this false combination shall be broken up. Then what is justifiable in theoretical speculation, viz. its refusing to be satisfied with common knowledge, its demanding a *different method* for the knowledge of the world as a whole from that used for the knowledge of the particular object—that characteristic can then obtain its rights in its own place and in the proper manner, viz. by means of a speculative philosophy which is conditioned *by practice*. If, instead, that erroneous combination is the end of the matter, the further conclusion will continue in force, that we are expected to recognise postulates of faith where knowledge is not merely possible but requisite (viz. in the

estimate which is formed of human cognition), and to know, where from the nature of the case only faith is in place (viz. with respect to the highest and conclusive cognition).

Nevertheless, we cannot reckon on Idealistic Philosophy, however manifold the assaults directed against it at this day, renouncing its methods in the immediate future. Mankind adhere very tenaciously to what has exercised for a while so important an influence on all their habits of thought. Many truths in the purely theoretical sphere, but also in the moral, and most of all in the religious sphere, appear absolutely to stand or fall with the habits of thought which have sprung from that erroneous combination. These habits are held equivalent, therefore, to the unassailable basal thoughts of every philosophy which is not flatly Materialistic. He who assails them is not refuted, but spurned with indignation as a vile person—as Anselm formerly rebuked his Nominalistic opponent as a *heretic in Dialectics*. Yet the attack must be made; those habits must always continue to be combated, and that, too, till such time as they finally succumb to the assault. For until that happens, there can be no thought of a restoration of agreement even regarding the most general foundations of our civilisation, in particular regarding the relation of religious faith, the moral regimen of life, and scientific research, to one another. And yet that is something which we must never cease to strive for.

What has just been said in a general way applies with twofold force in the *theological* sphere. Here there seems to be an assault on the foundations of the

faith if the traditional methods are combated. For it is indeed the case that in the religious and ecclesiastical sphere we adhere to tradition still more tenaciously than anywhere else. That is quite intelligible, moreover, since in that sphere, owing to the close connection formed with the sacred truths of the faith themselves, the habits of thought which have struck root seem to acquire a portion of their sanctity and inviolability. And yet it is precisely in theology where it is urgently necessary in the interest of Christianity to sweep those habits away. And that not merely for Apologetic reasons, viz. because we cannot otherwise succeed in giving account of the truth of our faith at the present time, but above all for the reason that Christian truth itself suffers direct harm in combination with this traditional philosophy. On that point the first Division has given sufficient elucidation. I return to it here, because now it is possible to repeat definitively, and without any restriction, what was formerly indicated expressly as a general truth, and only in a provisional way, in regard to that ancient philosophy which the Church found ready to hand, and which she employed and was obliged to employ. The so-called exaltation of faith to knowledge means nothing else, *and can mean nothing else*, than the inclusion of Christianity in a combination of Religion, Science, and Morality *which is in contradiction with it*, since it is dominated, not by the Christian idea of the chief good, but by an idea of it of quite a different type. We cannot remedy the evil by utilising for the elaboration and defence of the Christian faith, not the ancient philosophical systems, but some modern system derived from the

same source. We can do so only by proving that combination which is found at bottom to be itself erroneous, and demonstrating that it is rather the one which corresponds to Christianity that is true and rational.

It is just that matter with which we have been concerned here. And as regards the negative part of the problem, a substantial portion of it should now be finished. For if it has been shown that a theory rests on the erroneous combination of a true and a false idea, it is thereby broken up and refuted. That same result, however, may still be completed and further confirmed by other observations. And this object is attained by proving, in the first instance, that the interest of science, as well as that of speculative thought, can only receive harm at this day from the combination in question. We now direct our attention to this matter.

The question whether speculative philosophy furthers or hampers scientific research is not a simple question which might be answered without hesitation in the one sense or the other. If we look to the beginnings of science in antiquity, it will have to be admitted that then and also later what bulked most was the furtherance it gained. But nevertheless there was something involved from the first in that philosophy that could contribute to hamper the progress of knowledge. And at the present day the position of matters is that its influence on science, so far as it still extends, is wholly and entirely of a harmful nature. I will attempt to prove this conclusion in both its aspects.

As regards the first point, we have to recall the idea of the chief good in which speculative philosophy has its root. If that idea actually rules in men's hearts, if the chief good is sought in *Knowledge*, it is impossible but that from that fact a powerful impulse should also be derived for the furtherance of *Science* proper. It admits, in fact, of no doubt that the bent thus established in the Greek mind towards knowledge was from the first, and down to the later stages, a powerful lever for accomplishing all sorts of advances in knowledge. Indeed the question is forced upon us whether, if investigation was to be delivered from its primitive dependence on the Will and to be set going and continued, such an incentive, one which was not immediately given by the subject of investigation, was not requisite, an ideal impulse which helped men to surmount the difficulties, and even where there was a want of real results conjured up such for the imagination. At least in human affairs generally, but especially in the beginnings of an undertaking, nothing considerable is done without strong *Motives derived from the Will*. Methodical, scientific work often, however, requires self-denial and renunciation, not unfrequently requires devoted work from one generation that the next may arrive at a goal which is temporarily satisfactory; the feelings of intellectual pleasure, it might therefore naturally be assumed, were at first not strong enough to counterbalance the manifold causes of disinclination resulting from this state of things; and therefore it might be inferred that that powerful motive which was obtained from Idealistic philosophy, was not only conducive to the origin and development

of science, but was indispensable for this purpose. Be that, however, as it may, at all events technical science arose as philosophy, *i.e.* arose in a connection in which the world as a whole was looked at more than the particular object; and at all events there is implied in this a confirmation of the assumption that at first speculative philosophy promoted scientific research to a vast extent.

But with all this the other aspect which the subject presents must not be left out of view. Precisely in this impulse to acquire knowledge which is complete in itself with regard to the world as a whole, such knowledge as speculative philosophy seeks, — precisely in this there is involved, on the other hand, a *danger for science.* The latter, since its task is to seek knowledge in the strict sense of the word, and nothing but that, must often be contented with incomplete results. The perfection of science never consists in its being complete, but in the fact that on all sides there are opened up to it endless problems, yet such as furnish a prospect of increasing success. In this respect it forms an exact opposite to speculative philosophy, which desires thoroughly complete results, and where it appears, gives itself out as something complete and final. But if the two are combined with one another, the latter, from the nature of the case, gains the supremacy. And from this arises the danger we spoke of. It consists in the fact that occasion is given to conclude scientific work too hastily, and to proclaim what are simply prevailing hypotheses to be unimpeachable laws. Certainly the fetters thus forged are afterwards broken again, as soon

as new and really undoubted advances are made in knowledge, such as lead beyond these arbitrarily assumed limits. But every one knows what an expenditure of effort is necessary to accomplish that, and how powerful are the obstructions which are raised for science out of the prevailing prejudices. Not as if speculative philosophy should be made responsible for all such hampering prejudices. There are sources of them enough even outside it. What is affirmed is only that it is one of these sources, and a fruitful one too.

Worse still is something else. The combination of science with speculative philosophy has as its effect *that in the former the criteria of truth are displaced.* Two such criteria have to be distinguished. The chief and really decisive criterion of truth in science must always be simply the agreement of its conclusions with reality, with what is actually given, or with experience. With this is connected as a second and *subordinate* criterion of truth the accordance of the notions employed. That is derived from Logic, and comes to be of telling significance where an immediate check on every particular conclusion is not possible or may be omitted for the sake of brevity (p. 131). In brief, agreement with experience is the material, the accordance of the notions the formal, criterion of truth, and by these the conclusions of science have to be tested.

In speculative philosophy the reverse is the case. Here Reason appears as spontaneously productive, and constructs the system of *Absolute truth.* Whether the conclusions of that system agree with reality is a

secondary question, which is started at most at a subsequent stage. But that means simply that the order of rank assigned to the criteria of truth is here the reverse of what it was. The accordance of the notions stands unconditionally as the first and chief criterion. Only by that agreement which they present, by their interpenetration and by the compatibility without trace of contradiction which they exhibit—and that doubtless in the last resort comes to mean an æsthetic satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the architectonic structure of the system—can the truth here be gauged. The reality must be satisfied with being interpreted in all cases in the sense of the guiding notions of Reason; the knowledge of the world which is possessed is adjusted to the system. If, therefore, science is combined with speculative philosophy, something similar can easily come about in it; indeed, in that case such must in some measure be the result. The criterion of truth is displaced, with the result that a higher value is assigned to the formal agreement of the notions than to the agreement with reality. But in proportion as that is done science is corrupted.

The furthest point that can be reached in this process is the direct reversal of the relation between knowledge and reality. Instead of the facts being recognised as the law for knowledge, laws of reality are derived from thought, from Reason. It is no longer asked what things *are*, but what and how they *must be*. What is a necessity of thought is also real—that is an oft-repeated principle of speculative philosophy. Kant too still knows such a legislative significance for

things possessed by Reason. True, he knows it in the sense that that significance is realised in experience; wherefore experience is not neglected by him. But still that is an instance of speculative philosophy continuing to break in upon the Kantian system, and proves the affinity of the latter with that philosophy. However, this furthest point which is now treated is not reached so much in positive science, which can never so far forget its proper task, as in some philosophical systems originating in it. I have only mentioned the matter to show that that displacement of the criteria of truth really contains an injury to science, because its final consequence is nothing but a *complete perversion of the work of science.*

If now we ask whether at this day science still requires that incentive which was at first supplied to it by the basal motive of speculative philosophy, this question will have to be answered flatly in the negative. Scientific investigation has so far advanced in all departments, everywhere it has presented to it problems so concrete and positive and such as captivate one's interest in themselves, that it can dispense with the incentive in question. He who enters on the work of science in any definite department finds himself in a well-conducted establishment which can develop itself further by its own resources. What he requires besides is not so much a study of the world as a whole, while elaborating the particular object before him, as the moral motive which stimulates him to a true and conscientious prosecution of the duties of his calling. But that is a motive which makes him not inclined to listen

to the siren-song of a speculative philosophy, but on the contrary causes him to be on his guard against its allurements. Yet here, of course, the exception is always made that Logic and the methodical training which it is meant to impart never become superfluous. So too it is always to be desired that all concerned in scientific work should obtain a survey over the world as a whole, and should have some measure of philosophical education, so as to be preserved from being mere specialists. As to all that there is here no question whatever. What is affirmed is simply that scientific work, *as such*, has at this day become independent of those incentives which spring from speculative philosophy. But if that is true, it follows further that a connection with speculative philosophy can to-day only prove harmful to science. For if the advancement which it formerly gained from that connection has ceased, there remains only the detrimental influence of which mention has just been made in the second place. In fact we shall also be entitled to affirm that that influence has not yet by any means completely ceased to operate.

One great department of science of course, that, viz., of *Physical Science*, is to-day in a tolerably fortunate position as respects such dangers. In the main it has arrived at a clear delimitation of its work as distinct from all speculative systems, and is thus in some measure secured against philosophical invasions of its territory; or if they do occur, it does not need to trouble itself greatly about them. It owes that advantage to the nature of the objects it deals with, which was often mentioned previously, viz. to the

circumstance that they are given in a manner which involves constraint for every person. That is, they are given in such a way that *in conceiving them and fixing them down for further investigation* we require at all events no philosophical, speculative notions. But that is the *critical* point on which rests the independence of these sciences with respect to all philosophy. Nevertheless, much relating even to them and to the condition they are in serves to confirm what was said above. In the first instance, this is done indirectly by the fact that this independence of theirs qualifies them for the brilliant performances which can be pointed to —both issues having been developed in and with each other. For it appears from that that its emancipation from philosophy has served to restore soundness to positive science. On the other hand, the evil after-effect of the former connection has not yet by any means quite disappeared even here. It shows itself in the fact that even at this day Physical Science not unfrequently treads in the steps of speculative philosophy, forgets the *relative* character of its results, and attributes to them an *absolute value:* on the strength of them it actually claims next to exercise a determinative influence on things as a whole, not merely on science but also on life, on religion and morality. As if that belonged to Physical Science which Philosophy with a certain right claims for itself! And it is not with impunity that science thus passes beyond the limits of its own sphere. For apart from the hurtful influence on general culture, that transgression has occasionally and inevitably the hurtful reaction on the proper work of science which appears when fantastical

notions push their way anew into research. But for all that the Physical Sciences are here in a comparatively favourable position.

The situation is not so favourable in the case of the sciences which have the *mental and historical life* of men as the object of investigation. Here there are still very many traces of the evil consequences of mingling with conventional Idealistic philosophy. In proportion, certainly, as we have to do with purely historical problems, those traces tend to disappear. On the other hand, as soon as the recurring general facts of man's mental life are in question, they assert themselves. The matter of importance, the point where the influence of philosophy forces itself into science, can also be exactly described. It is no other than that which was mentioned above. The question is whether the object of investigation can be fixed in a manner which leaves no room for doubt and is the same for all minds. In purely historical problems that is the case. If owing to defective tradition there may only be imperfect success, and if there may be wide scope left, therefore, for differences of opinion, it is not thereby disproved that with regard to the determination of the object, and with regard to the methods by which results have to be reached, agreement prevails. Or if in the study of History, especially of definite divisions of it, opposite tendencies are stirred up so that common results cannot be arrived at, that is only an example of the influence of the Will on the Intellect with which precisely in this sphere we have always to contend anew. With that too we are not here concerned. But there are disciplines like Ethics and the

Philosophy of Religion above all which seem to require the Idealistic philosophy even for the determination of their object, and which are still, therefore, in most cases under its influence. The necessity is of course only apparent; the opinion that so it must be is erroneous—as has previously been shown repeatedly and in detail (p. 192). But now the opposite view, which must still be described as the prevailing one, has the effect of doing extensive harm in this particular sphere to scientific work. In these systematic disciplines there occurs that displacement of the criteria of truth which was spoken of. It is not the agreement of doctrinal conclusions with what is actually given in experience, but the accordance of the notions with one another, that becomes the decisive criterion of truth. The *craving for system* does violence to the facts. The presentation of facts is mistakenly replaced by the endeavour to illustrate a philosophical view by what experience supplies, and so to prove the correctness of the view. The opinion that in science it is not so much an articulated knowledge of facts and of their real connections as an "explanation" that is the important matter, actually degenerates here into the mischievous issue, that *known* phenomena, instead of being followed up and carefully investigated, are referred to high-sounding words which are *unknown* to the learner; and that is given out as an "explanation." Indeed, one who makes the facts themselves instead of traditional notions the object of his inquiry in these departments, must expect to hear the thoroughly astounding objection that he is losing himself in abstract discussions. There are even people for whom those notions

have become the facts themselves which are dealt with.

Thus positive science can to-day only suffer harm if it persists in maintaining a close combination with philosophical speculation. But it is also no less true that *speculative philosophy on its part is driven by that combination into false paths.* On the one hand a burden of proof is thereby imposed upon it which it is unable to bear; on the other hand in this connection, the most important question remains entirely undiscussed, though from the solution of it alone there can be expected an agreement as to the highest knowledge, and proof for that knowledge.

Two things have to be considered in deciding as to truth, in the first place the constraint of facts, and then the certainty of one's own life, but with that the certainty of what we can have no doubt about, since we have experienced in ourselves its elevating, its liberating, and blessed power (p. 196). The first gives a rule to science; here lies its strength, and upon this it builds its proofs. Now that combination spoken of, on which theoretical Idealism is based, leads to a search being made on the paths of science, and with its means, even for an answer to the last and highest questions, or to a demand for something of the kind, as the case may be. Speculative philosophy itself becomes science, the highest and conclusive science, but yet a science such as the others also are. Yet it is *utterly incapable* of satisfying the claims which are made and must be made on any such science. That is immediately apparent as soon as it is recognised that it is *the constraint of facts* on which, if we go to the very

bottom, all scientific certainty rests. But even if we pass from that—and we must pass from that here, because theoretical Idealism refuses to recognise this position of matters—what has been said continues final. No one can deny that up till this day speculative philosophy *has not been in a position* to support its conclusions, even approximately, with the clear evidence which marks a positive scientific theory. Every one must and will admit that it is necessary in these questions to appeal in part to personal conviction, to freedom, to the Will. But in that way speculative philosophy comes to be in an evil case, is put in a false light: what it should do and what it has pledged itself to, it is after all unable to accomplish. Are we wrong in assuming that it is this that makes so many representatives of modern science averse to it? The fact, viz., that it poses as if it were a science, and then expects those who are accustomed to tread the firm ground of positive investigation to get footing on airy structures? Are not others induced principally *on this account* to confuse all sorts of reflections on the results of their investigations in Physical Science with what humanity seeks as the solution of the enigma of the world? For if science has actually to pronounce the last word even upon the highest questions, is it not much more advisable to dress up the certain results of well-tried scientific technic and labour, so as to form a theory of the world, than to take part in metaphysical battles which are fought in the clouds? But even without reckoning all these evil consequences, which to-day are and to-morrow may have vanished again, which depend furthermore on the temperament

and disposition of the particular investigator—the highest truths which have dawned on the human mind necessarily come to stand in this connection as a species of *half-formed and imperfect knowledge.* But that is not true to the actual state of things. The knowledge of Reason too is *knowledge,* only knowledge of another species than that of the Understanding. The truth of it can never be confirmed or made good by the constraint of facts. The certainty of it flows from that other source from which science does not draw and must not draw. Therefore, too, there is no Idealistic speculation which does not derive its best power from this latter source. But on the ground of Theoretical Idealism that can only be done in a furtive and incidental manner. It often lies like a curse on modern philosophy, that it thinks it must support itself on the Physical Sciences and hang on to them; and yet if it does so it denies its *true character,* it forgets its *proper work.* It was different so long as science too continued to bear in a predominant degree the stamp of man's free mental productivity. Ever since that has ceased to be the case, and modern science has become what it is to-day, there has appeared here a veritable crisis. The imposing development and the brilliant successes of positive scientific research, which have quite a different origin, have made the combination of speculative philosophy with science which is posited in Theoretical Idealism an intolerable yoke for the former. In this connection, speculative philosophy is obliged to set before itself false problems, and is prevented from displaying its own really convincing power.

The reverse side to this is the other circumstance that the real question of principle in speculative philosophy, that of the idea of the chief good, remains undiscussed, seeing that a definite conception of that idea is introduced without any proof, as if it were self-evident that it is the correct one. Whence the consequence is that there is a want of *any real proof* for the highest knowledge, as also that the methodical derivation or the formal presentation of its particular conclusions, since it does not answer to the practical character of the guiding idea, cannot stand before the judgment of Reason. And that too is no accidental omission, something that occurs in one system and not again in another. Rather does theoretical speculation as such necessarily involve this omission, because it fails to see its real origin in an idea of the chief good, and seeks to ground itself not on that, but on what constitutes the nature of human knowledge (p. 251). But by doing so, by beginning with the Theory of Knowledge, it assumes that what is in truth the critical basal question, that relating to the chief good, is already decided in its own sense. And from that assumption all the consequences mentioned are then developed.

But now with all this the reservation must of course be made in the abstract, that this view (that which seeks the chief good in the sphere of Knowledge) might be proved by an examination of the different possible ideas of this kind to be the correct one and that which answers to Reason—a question the decision of which belongs to the next chapter. But that is in fact nothing more or less than a purely abstract

reservation without any material significance. If it is actually established that human knowledge has not that peculiarity the assumption of which forms the groundwork here, there is also the implication that theoretical speculation is overthrown. Without that groundwork no one will wish to adhere to the idea of the chief good which answers to it. And therefore we may now assert here, and that without further reservation, that in view of the *modern condition of the positive sciences* the old combination of them with philosophical speculation has simply become an absurdity, that scientific investigation as well as speculation itself is hampered by it if not absolutely *vitiated*.

From this point of view also it therefore appears requisite that the erroneous combination which is attended with such evil consequences should be broken up. But this is at the same time that combination on which rests the organisation of knowledge and science which is most widely prevalent even at this day. The problem therefore is to replace it by another, one which does not indeed correspond to the usual habits of thought (a matter which is relatively of no consequence), but which does correspond to the modern condition of things in positive science (which is in truth the important point). In the preceding chapter an attempt was made to develop such an organisation (p. 186). It is not pressed by the difficulties which rise up before the traditional view so as to be totally insurmountable. In it no science is restricted or hindered by another; each can prosecute its own tasks unhampered. But each remains

also within its own limits. Not as though such limits were marked for it by external authority or in arbitrary fashion; they are rather antecedently fixed for it in the statement and by the conception of its own problem. And this not in view of outside interests, and not even for the sake of absolute truth—they simply require to be respected *in the most direct interest of the positive science concerned*, for the reason, viz., that beyond them there lies what means death to that science, viz. empty imagination and fancy. Speculative philosophy again can develop and shape itself in its own sphere in conformity with the principles inherent in it, without, however, losing *that* connection with scientific work which really unites the two.

But the same result appears farther from another and final consideration, viz. from the observation that Theoretical Idealism cannot bring the fundamental problems of philosophy to a settlement, because it leads to a *false statement of the questions* furnished by them. To show this is the third and last object we have proposed for ourselves in this chapter. We shall have to consider in connection with it what can be made out as to the problems in question on the standpoint adopted by us.

The traditional basal problems of philosophy I consider to be first the *problem of Knowledge* itself, the question of the relation of Thought and Being, and on the other hand the *question of Freedom*. In the first place we look at the former, which is the more important for us here.

Now, if we have to discuss the relation of Thought and Being, we cannot quite shake off the feeling which finds expression in the well-known words of Dante, to the effect that he who enters must leave hope behind him. True, there are always people still who launch forth on this open sea with the firm confidence that they will reach the goal of a common understanding; but the hope which animates them at first must soon be transformed into the sullen self-consciousness that *they* of course know the truth, but that the lazy crowd disdains to follow them on the way that leads to the lofty goal. For here every one remains alone in the end with the adherents whom he has been able to collect round his flag. To-day there is as little thought as ever of a real, universal understanding. For us, however, such a state of things is not alarming, but rather meets our purpose. Already it points plainly enough to what we would like to show, viz. that the problem in its traditional form is simply *insoluble*.

If we place ourselves at the standpoint of speculative philosophy, taking that philosophy in the genuine sense of Plato, the truth that the problem is insoluble appears from the following circumstances. On that standpoint we cannot possibly refrain from seeking to know the *proper and essential nature of things* themselves. It is not to the fleeting appearance, it is not to the transient phenomenon, which changes in sportive play from day to day, which is to-day and to-morrow again is not, or is to-day in this form and to-morrow in another—it is not to this that knowledge is directed here, but to the eternal,

the unchangeable and unconditioned essence of all things, their nature as it is in itself. He who renounces such knowledge gives up *the standpoint itself:* so long, on the other hand, as that standpoint is adhered to, the requirement also continues in force. And we at least cannot find fault with that. In this there is revealed the practical element of our mental life which forms such an essential part of the Platonic philosophy, the desire for a perfect and conclusive satisfaction for our need of life. Only here, in consequence of that fundamental motive of speculative philosophy of which mention was made at length, this desire has been transferred in a way which cannot be approved to the *theoretical* sphere. On this standpoint, therefore, the requirement is imperative that the eternal nature of things as it is in itself should be reached by means of knowledge. But, on the other hand, if this problem is really put, it is equally impossible to alter or make any deduction from the observation that what we know is always things *as they exist for us*, or, if the expression is preferred, that what we know is and remains always a *Phenomenon*. This truth does not by any means require to be understood forthwith in the sense in which Kant conceived it, and in which therefore it is especially familiar to us at this day. Therefore, too, it is not possible to refute it by objections which may be raised against the development of this fundamental thought by Kant, and the issue of it in his system. Apart altogether from his conception, it is an elementary truth which no one can deny; it is implied by the *act of knowledge itself* that the content

of knowledge which we have in this act is always a content as existing for us, and that anything else is impossible.

But if that is the case, then from this standpoint the problem remains insoluble. The actual character of our knowledge compels the abandonment of what cannot possibly be abandoned if the standpoint is to be preserved. The representatives of that standpoint have only the choice of surrendering their position or of coming in conflict with an unalterable fact. Of course the choice is not difficult for them. Their *faith* in the creative power of human reason helps them to get over the conflict. For there is implied in that faith the conviction that there is an organic and essential connection between the nature of things as it is in itself and human reason. By this means it can be demonstrated that the fact mentioned has only a provisional significance, representing a provisional standpoint of reflective thought, one which true reason can transcend and raise to the "absolute" standpoint. However, such decrees of speculative reason are no real *solution* of the problem of knowledge. An *absolute* decision as to the relation of Thought and Being is not given by them. No Theory of Knowledge, however ingenious, is able to furnish proof of that relation. For it may set about the matter as it will, indeed it may follow the modern fashion and choose its point of departure quite "empirically" in the Physiology of Sense-perception —what enables it to reach the result is never anything but the faith which it brings with it as a *presupposition*. An explanation of the process of

knowledge such as commands the assent of all minds can always lead only to relative results, as has previously been shown. It is confined to the sphere in which we have two aggregates of phenomena to deal with—subjective thought and objective things—and their relation to each other. The advance beyond this sphere is a matter of *faith*, and of faith too in the wrong place, viz. where knowledge is required. Therefore too such faith gives itself out as a perception commanding the assent of all minds, a character however which it cannot sustain. The problem is and remains in spite of all such attempts and proofs unsolved as before. For the reasons adduced above it is simply insoluble.

But perhaps the expedient can be adopted of analysing the act of knowledge and ascertaining exactly what portion of that act, in which Thought and Being are combined, belongs to the one side and what portion belongs to the other. A process of the kind forms an element of the attempts at solution just mentioned, as was hinted at in the sketch we gave. And that is an idea which is so strongly suggested, which seems so self-evident, that we cannot be surprised if extensive effect has been given to it from time to time. For in such a case, only the same thing is done which we do in other instances, when we have a compound object before us and want to ascertain how the component factors look each by itself, what each is when taken by itself alone. Thus then it passes at the present day even among large classes of people for an axiom, as it were, that the naïve picture of the world is not the real world—the Physiology of Sense-perception is understood to de-

monstrate that in a literally palpable manner—but that there is presented the problem of making out with the aid of science what the real world itself is which lies behind it, the world which is shown phenomenally in the naïve picture. Now it can form no part of our purpose here to follow out this undertaking in detail in the manifold forms which it assumes or can assume. It is perfectly sufficient too to examine the fundamental thought common to all such attempts, the thought, viz., that it is possible by inquiring as to human knowledge to ascertain what Thought and Being are each by itself, and how they are related to each other.

Regarding this fundamental thought, then, it can be affirmed without hesitation that it is *a mistake. The world is either entirely subjective or entirely objective.* We cannot bisect, we cannot separate and keep apart from one another the subjective and objective factors. The world is entirely subjective; no point can be discovered in it which is anything else than a mere phenomenon. This is true of the material world which appears in Time and Space, consequently also of our own bodies, which belong to it. It is no less true of the inner conscious life of man that it is a succession of peculiar phenomena. The thought that the world is nothing but a phenomenon must itself in that case be regarded as a phenomenon. Or, again, the world is entirely objective. That is true of the material world, this world striking us all as being something objectively real. It is true of our body, which forms a member of that material world. And our inner experiences are something occurring objectively in this objective world.

The thought, too, that the world is so constituted is an objective occurrence in it. Thus each standpoint can be perfectly maintained by itself to the end. The two are equally well warranted. The latter is the one which is natural to us all, that which we always adopt without question in common life. The other appears as soon as effect is truly given to the consideration which presses itself irresistibly on our notice in the discussion of our problem, the consideration that we can have knowledge only with regard to our ideas and what appears to us in them. *Each of the standpoints, however, must be taken by itself and must be maintained to the end, if it is to appear warranted.* As soon as they are mixed up together, and the bisection begins, the separation of the objective and subjective portions of knowledge, we are in a state of *radical confusion.* Even the Physiology of Sense-perception makes not the least difference with regard to that fact. What is discovered by it as the objective constitution of the world is for the one standpoint no less phenomenal than the world of light and sound itself. For the other standpoint, on the contrary, the conclusion in spite of Physiology is that we are in an objective world. The investigation referred to only gives information regarding processes in this objective world. For light in the eye and sound in the ear are no less objective than those vibrations of ether and waves of sound outside the organs which awaken by means of the latter the respective sensations in the conscious soul.

However intelligible it is, therefore, that the attempt should have been made to arrive on this path at a

solution of the problem, it cannot really be solved in that way. He who enters on that course rather does precisely and must do precisely what signifies, as soon as it takes place, the beginning of endless confusion. For it cannot take place otherwise than by our seeking to reconcile those two standpoints with each other, though they simply exclude one another, and to proceed with a bisection. But that is just what can never succeed. It does not do to institute here an inquiry of the kind which we have in other cases, say, where the existing relation of two aggregates of processes is examined—whether they are conceived as phenomena or as objective processes. Or else, if that is done, such an inquiry is of that character which has often been mentioned: it brings to light only relative results, but does not furnish information regarding the relation of Thought and Being.

Accordingly there seems to be left only the standpoint of Kant, or one akin to it, such as is frequently maintained at the present day with support from his. On this standpoint the conviction that theoretical knowledge has always to do only with a phenomenal world is raised to the rank of a principle; side by side with such knowledge, the practical sphere, Religion and Morality above all, has its significance recognised, whether it is declared, as by Albert Lange, to be the sphere of the Ideal and of poetic fiction (held to be indispensable, doubtless, for man), or whether the proper ideas of Kant are more closely adhered to, and a way is seen opening up here that leads to a species of knowledge which is based on practice, a species which has to take the place of the highest knowledge. Herrmann

especially has recently represented this view in an important and original manner.

Now it has often enough been pointed out in the preceding pages what a far-reaching effect in our opinion the undertaking of Kant involves, when he seeks to gain the highest knowledge on this practical path, and not on that of theoretical speculation. In that undertaking of his we see *the critical turning-point* in the conception of the central idea of the chief good, an idea which we have acknowledged to be the principle of all genuine speculative philosophy. On the other hand, occasion has no less frequently been found for stating that we cannot confess adherence to the general design of the Kantian system, even in its modern, simplified form. Precisely as regards the *conception of theoretical knowledge* it stops short at a kind of strangely reduced Platonism, at that species of philosophy to the root of which Kant otherwise laid the axe, viz. in the other line of thought which has been mentioned. With all that, however, we are not at present concerned; we have rather to do only with the question whether on this standpoint there has been success in solving the problem of knowledge, the problem which has as its subject-matter the relation of Thought and Being.

On that matter we certainly do not require to dwell long. A problem is not solved by *raising the insolubility of it to the rank of a principle.* But that is what is done here. And further, if the matter is rightly understood, the result is not that the whole question is transplanted to other ground, and that it is shown how in the usual conception of the problem

we are dealing with a false statement of the question, whereas with a right estimate the problem as such vanishes. No ; the problem has precisely the central place assigned to it in one's interest, and the whole position is based on the consideration that it is insoluble. But such procedure necessarily allows the sting of an unsolved problem to continue with full virulence. The contemporaries of the Critical Philosophy did not mean to rest there, and it cannot be presumed that the restoration of it among us will have the success which was all along denied to its founder and creator. At all events, here as elsewhere there is no thought of a solution of the problem. Let us then look now to what can be said about it on the standpoint adopted by us. That has already been indicated by the last remarks. For our view is no other than the one just alluded to, the view, viz., that the problem is rooted in a *false statement of the question*, and with the mere correction of the statement must disappear.

For the common practical man, at all events, the problem does not exist. And further, it is non-existent not merely for him who is never influenced by philosophy and science, but for all of us, so far as we necessarily share the standpoint of common consciousness as men who are engaged in the practical work of life. Even the representative of Idealistic philosophy, though he may follow it even in its boldest flight, forms no exception here. As surely as the Physiologist continues to see light and to hear sounds notwithstanding his deeper knowledge of the processes concerned, does one who becomes a philosopher move in a real world as much as ever he did, one which is

anything but his mere idea or materialised Logic. But the same must also be said of *positive science*. For it the problem does not exist, and looked at from its standpoint must appear absolutely meaningless. Though individual investigators may trouble themselves about it, and while occupying themselves with philosophy may in a certain sense assign a high value to the question and the answer to it, *research itself*, we must admit, is in no wise affected by it. The most decided opposition on the philosophical question, such as exists between Idealists and Materialists, does not need to involve the least divergence with regard to the conception of the task of science and the proper execution of it. But that means that for positive science as such the problem does not exist at all. Here as well as in common life it is a presupposition recognised by all that in the act of thought Subject and Object are combined with one another, and that it does not present the least difficulty to keep the two—things and our thoughts about things—distinct from each other, in a way that suffices for the purposes of daily life, as also for those of scientific research. The question of the relation of Thought and Being, of the separation of Subject and Object in the absolute sense of the philosophical problem, nowhere emerges in this province of thought.

The origin of the problem lies rather in Theoretical Idealism. It arises first of all from the fundamental conception of that philosophy, a conception which misplaces the chief tasks and aims of man by putting them in the sphere of knowledge. For on that supposition it certainly becomes a burning question how we

can get over the subjective limits of our knowledge and arrive at true objective knowledge, such as connects us with the eternal nature of things, their nature as it is in itself. When the problem is thus raised, the question of the chief good is practically decided already in a definite sense, viz. in the sense of Theoretical Idealism. The circumstance that the problem of knowledge is put in the forefront, as if it were understood as a matter of course that it comes first and lays the foundation for all that follows, is due to nothing else again except the erroneous combination with the criticism of which we are occupied in this chapter. *In truth it is not the first and most important problem at all, but another must first be settled before there can be a decision even as to the correct statement of the question in the problem of knowledge.*

This other question is that referring to the chief good, or the question how Religion, the Moral regimen of life, and Science are related to each other. For that is the issue of the question of the chief good. Here we must once more call to mind a discussion of the first Division, one which was commenced by us there for the purpose of becoming acquainted with and being able to criticise the origin of ecclesiastical dogma. I mean our study of what has just been mentioned again, the relation to one another of the three most important concerns of the human mind. On the former occasion we said that in every philosophy which aims at being a religious and moral system of thought as well, the question of the relation of God, the world, and man is beyond comparison the most important. We realised further that modern thought

again acknowledges that the kernel of this question lies in the inquiry as to how Religion, Science, and Moral Life are related to one another. And we arrived at the result that what decides in this inquiry is an idea of the chief good (I. p. 52 ff.). Again, touching the conception of this idea, we were confronted by the alternative that either Knowledge or Moral Action must be viewed as the higher in order, as the sphere in which mankind have to seek their highest tasks and aims (I. p. 91)—an alternative which we frequently meet with again in various forms at later stages. All this was formerly discussed, as was said, from the particular point of view referred to. Our language, therefore, took the hypothetical form: *if* a philosophy *aims* at being a religious and moral system of thought as well, the settlement of the question mentioned is the first and most important task which it has to discharge. Here we fall back again on that position, in the sense that we repeat what was said without restriction and without reservation with reference to all philosophy: this and no other question is *the basal problem of philosophy*. For a philosophy which does *not* undertake as one of its functions to regulate the life of its adherents, and to assist them to reach a supreme standpoint from which to judge all things, *i.e.* a religious standpoint, is simply an absurdity, and is not even of the slightest value to any person.

Undoubtedly this affirmation comes to be directly at variance with the modern attempts to transform philosophy itself into a science, and in fact into an "exact" science. *But we may add that there is nothing more foolish than that undertaking.* Certainly

many disciplines, such as Psychology, Ethics, Logic, etc., can only derive advantage by being transformed into positive sciences: they will give proofs of progress in proportion as that change is effected. The history of the sciences is the history of their emancipation from the system of philosophy, and that history is not yet at an end. In so far those widely prevalent attempts to arrive at "scientific philosophy" can only be welcomed. But all those disciplines, though they may be committed after such transformation to the care of the "philosophers," as they were before, which is partly probable, partly as with Logic certain, have to be most carefully distinguished from philosophy itself. To want to transform it into a science, means simply to want to emancipate it from itself, but thereby to destroy it, or, as the case may be, to form a hybrid *which is neither philosophy nor science.* For the fact is that science as such stops short at what is relative, while philosophy gives up its whole position as soon as it foregoes its claim to reach the Absolute. The fact is that in the sphere of Knowledge there is no way opened from the Relative to the Absolute. In order to remain what it is, philosophy must therefore direct its aim from the first at *things in their totality*, and must look not only at Knowledge but at the Moral regimen of life and at the Religious standpoint as well, as the means by which alone there is for man an opportunity of coming into contact with the Absolute. Its fundamental problem does not lie in the sphere in which the constraint of facts proves decisive, but in that of *Mental Freedom.* It is no other than the problem mentioned in the previous

discussions, the question of the relation of Religion, Science, and Moral life, the question of the chief good, the question of the Highest Knowledge and the way that leads to it, questions which all come to one and the same thing. The proof for all this lies in the discussions taken collectively which are instituted by us in the second Division. In particular, the points brought out at the close of the preceding chapter (p. 224) should be compared.

Here we have specially to consider that there is the further consequence that the problem of knowledge passes into the second place. The correct statement of the question in that problem depends first of all on the way in which the basal question spoken of above is decided. And only if it must be decided in the sense that knowledge has to be exalted above the moral life does the problem of knowledge pass into the question of the relation of Thought and Being. But it is rather the contrary decision that is the correct one, as has partly been shown already and will be fully demonstrated in the next chapter. Consequently the customary presentation of the problem of knowledge rests on a false statement of the question. Rightly understood, that problem must be treated and settled in the manner which has been exemplified in the preceding pages. And further, we find then, on the basis so attained, that there is no occasion to inquire about the relation of Thought and Being, just as common consciousness or positive science contains no inducement to enter on the question. A few words will suffice to prove that statement in detail.

We take our stand on the practical position of man

in the world. The truth that the world which surrounds us is *real* is guaranteed to us by the interaction between it and *our Will*, the *constraint* of facts, on which our knowledge rests, being itself an experience of the Will and based on that interaction. Our Will is dependent on the world of experience, and interposes actively again in shaping its processes. The world is therefore as real as our Will, *i.e.* as we ourselves are. And if one asks about any other reality than this, the inquiry has no rational meaning that we can imagine.

Now, if closer consideration shows us that the world of experience with its things forming unities and its efficient causes is in good part a product of the Intellect as it works in the service of the Will, that circumstance is certainly of the greatest significance. It opens up to us an insight into the relative meaning and relative value of all knowledge of the world; it convinces us of the fact that knowledge as such cannot be the way to the highest goal, the way to God. But it has in no wise the significance of acquainting us with any other reality than that which we become aware of in our experience. For what there is left of the latter if we abstract the Forms of our Intellect—an immeasurable series of changes in Time and Space—is no less than before something given for us, and therefore not, as might be supposed, the truly objective and real world, of which experience shows us only a reflected image subjectively produced, but rather in this isolation nothing but an *abstract thought*, the material as it were out of which the Intellect constructs *the real world*. We inquire about no other real world than that

of the Will; and its world is that of experience, that in which the knowing Subject and the Object of knowledge are combined into a unity which is for us indissoluble; *i.e.* we can make relative distinctions like that just mentioned, but never get by means of them beyond the world which rests on this unity. In the same way the distinction previously treated between the naïve and the scientific pictures of the world has to be estimated. It has not the sense that the latter, in contradistinction to the former, has to be accounted by us the real world; rather does science subserve our practical purposes in *that* real world which coincides with the naïve picture. The Physiology of Sense-perception itself makes no difference on that fact. The world which is illuminated for us with light and colour, and which reverberates for us with sounds, is *the reality:* what there is apart from it again is nothing but an element of reality isolated in thought, not the reality itself. But if it is asked what the reality was before there was consciousness and with it the capacity to perceive light and sound, we reply that only the Philosophy of Nature in the sense previously defined (p. 202) can raise such a question, but that in it the answer is also contained at the same time. And the answer is that the world before consciousness was *the way* to the world as it is for consciousness. And only in relation to this real world as given for consciousness can we think that other world, which indeed can itself also be represented only in the Forms of our consciousness and by the means supplied by our Intellect.

If, therefore, we place ourselves at the standpoint which all that has preceded indicates for us, the stand-

point, viz., that knowledge, important and indispensable as it is, remains after all subordinate to the practical ends of man, as being means for these, we find absolutely *no occasion* to raise the question of the relation of Thought and Being in any form. We find as little occasion to do so as the common consciousness of the person engrossed in practical work does. Indeed, the mode of view to which we are led by this procedure is no other whatever than that of this *common consciousness*. There is only one distinction. All the inferences of naïve Rationalism are absolutely excluded, but for that very reason it also follows that all objections coming from Critical Idealism lose their point. And further, the fact that such is the case is involved at once in and with the connection in which we acknowledge here the reality of the world and the truth of the common conception. For that connection is completely governed by the thought that the practical position of man in the world is what is decisive, or that *the relation to the Will is the measure of reality*. Only on that consideration is the assertion based, that the world as existing for us is the true reality and the only reality moreover that there is. Only for that reason can it be said that the question of the relation of Thought and Being loses its meaning, and that there exists no incentive to make us seek behind the world of the Will, as we have it in common experience, the world which is real in the strict sense. But then it follows also that the means of knowledge reach no farther than our experience of facts, *i.e.* that all attempts of naïve Rationalism to reach beyond the limits of experience and to gather up our knowledge of

the world into a perfect whole have no connecting links in our real knowledge of the real world. On the other hand, by the very same consideration, the objections of Critical Idealism are entirely obviated, in so far, viz., as that philosophy before it reaches expression has received full consideration. Indeed, is it not such a mode of view that the philosophy of Kant leads to as its issue? For if the after-effects of Platonic speculation in his doctrine are neutralised, a speculation in fact to which it is opposed even in its fundamental principle, what is there then left except the view just set forth, the view, viz., that the objective real world is no other than the world of experience, since the relation to the Will and our practical purposes is the sole measure of reality given to us? Apart from that, we may at all events assert:—our conception is no other than that of the common practical man, only with the limitation and reservation of which mention has now been made.

But of course one who has somehow personally adopted the motives of speculative philosophy, and experienced as his own the needs of the human soul on which it is based, will reject *a limine* the explanation hit upon here. He will say that it is all quite good and well founded, only it is not sufficient, and is rather something which is merely preliminary. For now there arises in the human mind the crying need of a *true reality* and of a knowledge of it: on that ground the common reality of ordinary knowledge is condemned as being of a miserable and transient nature. What is given here as the end is held to be only the beginning, the stimulus to seek the true

beginning. That, it is said, every true man must feel and experience in himself, every person who ventures to put aside deception and show and to look at the real position of matters, as one succeeds in doing when he takes the genuinely philosophical path of deeper *reflection on self* (*Selbstbesinnung*).

We are not disposed to deny what is declared in such language; we are rather inclined ourselves to assent with full conviction to this need of the human mind. But we do so only with a reservation which points to a later discussion, and with a demand the justice of which appears from all that has already been said.

Now the reservation is this, that it seems to us hazardous, in taking this step beyond common reality, to rest one's case on the belief that such a need exists in every person, and that with sufficient reflection on self it must force itself on every one's notice. For how now if a sincere and thoughtful person assures us that he has taken care that the necessary self-examination should in no respect be omitted, but that he can discover nothing of the nature of such a need in himself? The only thing then left is to require of him as *a duty that he should accustom himself to such a need*, and further, that he should seek the satisfaction of it which is consistent with the truth. But then on what ground can we do so, if we can appeal to nothing but the affirmation derived from our own experience that man has such a need, a need which the other still denies? Obviously there is something wanting here which is of no slight significance. The necessity we are under of not stopping

short with common reality and the knowledge of it must be based on other ground than that which can be got from an affirmation which is neither more nor less than a *personal confession*.

And now for the demand, which follows from what has been said. It is to the effect that the need referred to, which aspires beyond the common reality of ordinary experience, should be recognised as one which is *pre-eminently practical*, and not primarily intellectual. Briefly stated, what is intimated by it is the religious need or a modification of it. And as in a religion of the higher order there are two elements most closely combined with each other, viz. the attempt to satisfy the practical need for blessedness, and theoretical faith in God and His relation to the world, but so that the former is determinative—the need in question is in a position exactly corresponding to this. There is certainly the further aim at seeing all things in a new light, at recognising them in a new connection; but this is desiderated only as the necessary result of a new practical position relatively to the world, or rather above the world *in communion with God*, with which one has primarily to do. The circumstance that this is not observed by speculative philosophy, that it believes it has to do here with a purely or at least pre-eminently intellectual matter, is the consequence of that fundamental error in it which has been sufficiently described. It is only an insight into the practical character of the need in question that allows us further to speak of it as something characteristic of humanity generally. But we are concerned here not with something

requiring to be set forth in still fuller detail, or even to be proved; we are concerned only with an inference from all that has preceded. We have given expression to the matter here, because it has to be shown that when the fundamental conception represented by us is adopted, the problem of knowledge in its traditional form simply disappears.

And here now it is easily made clear that so far as this new and differently constituted sphere of knowledge is concerned, we have as little occasion as we have in dealing with the knowledge of common reality to raise the question of the relation of Thought and Being. Here, too, it is understood as a matter of course, that we have to do with a reality *existing for us*. The notion of reality is in both cases the same. Here, as there, the sphere is real to which we ourselves as feeling, willing, aspiring beings belong, and which, on the other hand, includes in itself the conditions for the satisfaction of our need of life. If, nevertheless, the distinction between the one species of reality and the other is so great that only he who learns to turn away unsatisfied from the one turns to this other and seeks it, that is due to the *difference between the practical needs* which come in question in the one case and in the other. The reality of common knowledge, which remains like that knowledge something relative, answers to the changing needs of daily life in the world; in this other reality we seek the final, complete, unconditional satisfaction of our need of life; it must therefore, consistently with that fact, be conceived as a permanent, eternal, unchangeable reality. But that does not disprove the assertion

that here too it is and remains a reality *existing for us* which we know, and that it can never enter our minds to inquire about any other.

I believe that yet a further step is possible here. Traced back to its ultimate root, the craving for a knowledge of "Things in themselves," or for a knowledge which is not merely for human, but for every conceivable intelligence, is simply nothing but the practical (religious) need of an eternal and unchangeable reality, a reality in which a perfect satisfaction of the soul is to be found. Supposing for a moment there is a real satisfaction for this, the highest of all the practical needs of man, his whole practical life and action, even that which he exhibits in the world and in relation to it, must be regulated by starting from the fixed point thus given. It is not otherwise in the sphere of knowledge. As a new species of perception is necessarily developed in and with the highest practical satisfaction alluded to, a highest form of knowledge, which is not bound to the circle of the world and the limits of common knowledge indicated by it, this perception will now be related to the world also as the sum-total of the objects of common knowledge, and will present it to us in a new light, in the light of that *eternal truth* which has now and only now been attained. It is therefore intelligible how a desire can be developed from the practical need we have been speaking of which extends to the knowledge of things in general. But it is entirely wrong if it is turned in the direction of an enigmatical mythical Thing-in-itself behind the phenomenal world of common consciousness. That is nothing but a consequence of the more

general error lying at bottom here, the error which causes the peculiarity of the higher knowledge alluded to in virtue of which it is essentially conditioned by practice, to be overlooked. In truth, we have to do with a new apprehension of things, according to their *value* and their *significance*, an apprehension which cannot be extracted from the husk of common knowledge or inferred from it, but which must be given from above by the Giver of every good and perfect gift—being inferred from the apprehension of God, but so from that of the First Cause and the Final Purpose of all things. There is, in truth, not the slightest occasion to inquire about any other knowledge than such as has for its object the reality existing for us.

What remains for me is to mark off here, as I have done elsewhere, the view now set forth as against Positivism, which on its part likewise puts aside the question of the relation of Thought and Being, or of Phenomena and Things-in-themselves, as erroneous and aimless. Positivism is indigenous to France and England principally; with regard to Comte himself, who gave it its name, we came to an understanding when we had occasion formerly to deal with the subject (p. 207). But it concerns us more closely, so far as relates to the point now treated, to look at a German representative of Positivism, one who, *consistently with the traditions of German philosophy*, has occupied himself at special length with this point, and that too all the more as that applies to the same acute inquirer whose criticism of Platonism we adopted above (p. 235).

Laas describes his view as Correlativity (*Correlativismus*), and gives expression to it in the words: no Object without Subject, but also no Subject without Object. And further, he wishes to have that understood as a complete equalisation of the two factors; he expressly rejects all views which in any way transfer the centre of gravity to the Subject. "Subject and Object are inseparable *twins*, stand or fall with one another. Or to be a perceiving (or, as the case may be, since all thought is developed from perception, a thinking) Subject without perceiving (or thinking) *something* is impossible; in other words, consciousness, soul, Ego, apart from and beyond sensuous perception is—nothing."[1] For this view of the matter also, then, all discussions about Thought and Being, about Things-in-themselves, etc., belong to the realm of fancy. Here too they are only accounted the natural consequences of an erroneous statement of the question.

But while this result is correct, it is equally true that the proof is far from obvious. And Laas gives no other proof at all than that comprised in the sentences just quoted. His diffuse Theory of Knowledge[2] is simply nothing but a detailed criticism of the opposite (Platonic) standpoint in its manifold varieties, and therefore adds nothing of a positive nature to the proof. In this way, however, one cannot succeed in thoroughly eradicating the traditional error. What lies at the foundation of the Idealistic philosophy is indelibly stamped on the human soul, and must some-

[1] *Idealismus und Positivismus*, i. p. 181 f. The additions in brackets transfer to the text in abridged form an explanation given by the author in a note.

[2] In the third volume of the work mentioned above, 1884, p. 691.

how make itself felt as the predominating truth. Indeed, genuine philosophy which does not forego its essential claims, *is* Idealism, and draws from other sources than positive science depends on. That Positivism which is not incorporated as an element in *a general theory that is itself again Idealistic*, is something which is but half-finished and unstable. It signifies the dissolution of theoretical Idealism without being able to put anything new in its place. It stops short itself at the fundamental error of theoretical Idealism, the error, viz., of assigning the first place to the Intellect, and only despairs of really and thoroughly carrying out the view which forms the basis. If the estimate of the traditional problem of Knowledge which is represented by Laas as well as ourselves is really to be well founded, that end can be gained only if a general theory is adopted which rests on the perception, that the practical position of man in the world is the decisive matter, while knowledge is the universal and indispensable means for his practical ends as set before him in that position. For that is what answers to the facts. We require to start from this point in order to view all questions as they really are. It is, as it were, the elementary rule into which all other calculations are resolved, or to which they can be referred, that is gained in this way. The traditional problem of knowledge, too, can really be got over only *in this connection*. And the fact that, apart from that connection, a whole succession of distinguished investigators have become wearied with the problem and seek to have done with it, only proves how truly the real character of our knowledge compels

us to look at the matter in this way. But that cannot possibly by itself alone be the last word that has to be said on the subject.

Our view doubtless ends next in what is so emphatically condemned by Laas, the Subjectivism which asserts a preponderance of the Subject over the Object. But a precedence of the kind is also implied by the knowledge of the Understanding as such (p. 184), and as something actually given in experience cannot possibly be disputed. Yet it is not this, taken simply by itself, that decides against the opinion of Laas referred to. For this actual exaltation of the *knowing* Subject above the Object lies entirely within the sphere of the relative, and does not disprove the assertion that what we call Subject and Object are given only in relation to one another, that therefore Correlativity is the conclusion of the matter as long as we consider only the relation posited in *perception or thought.* The crucial point is that in the exaltation alluded to *the Will* asserts itself, and that whether there is a question of exaltation or (as in the knowledge acquired by Reason) of subordination, the Will compels the Subject to conceive everything in relation to itself and its purposes. For since the Soul, the Subject, the Ego, or whatever we may call it, is not chiefly perception and thought, but willing and striving, this constraint of the Will is decisive. *For that reason* we adhere finally in the basal conception to the preponderance of the Subject over the Object. But that, moreover, is quite inevitable. We cannot leap away from our shadow. We cannot get above and beyond ourselves and be transferred to an imaginary

standpoint above existing things, but must take our standing-ground in the position given us in the world and relatively to it. And in doing so we arrive, if one will so call it, at a Subjectivism which is based on practice: it would be more correctly described as Idealism. Then, too, it is only in connection with such Idealism that the traditional problem of knowledge, as corresponding to the correct perception which has been mentioned and which is shared by Positivism, can be definitively settled.

We can treat the second of the two problems mentioned at the outset, *the question of Freedom*, much more briefly. This question may perhaps be described as the fundamental problem of philosophy on the side of practice, while the one just discussed appears as the fundamental problem on the side of theory. But here also the position of matters is that on the standpoint of traditional theoretical speculation the question finds no settlement, and cannot possibly do so.

For that speculation regards the laws which are embodied in things and govern their whole activity and interaction as the essence of them. As a further consequence of this view, the accordance of the notions concerned is accounted by it the decisive criterion of truth. Now what we understand by Freedom, and must understand by it if the word is to have an unambiguous meaning, is at all events some exemption possessed by man from the obligation or constraint which requires him to act at a given moment in one way and no other. According to the prevailing view, however, this Freedom from obligation or constraint

is understood as an exception occurring at this *one* point in favour of man from the causal necessity otherwise pervading all existence. It is not possible, moreover, to see how it could be conceived otherwise, if the general view just indicated is pre-supposed. The principle of Causality is in the last resort again the fundamental principle of that system of law in which the essence of things is discovered; every exception from that system, therefore, must be understood as an exemption from causal necessity. Freedom is therefore, according to the current notion, the power or capacity of starting a new series of operations, of interposing new points of departure in the mechanism of nature's processes generally, as that mechanism is determined by Causation. And the question is whether there really is such Freedom or not.

The consistent maintenance of the view which is accepted as the basis, leads to a denial of the existence of such Freedom, and to a reference of the opinion of men that they are free in their action to an illusion of consciousness. For if the essence of things does consist in the system of law which was spoken of, how should man form an exception? Or how can a consistent (*i.e.*, according to the supposition, a true) system of notions be constructed, if such an element of contradiction to the general system of law is recognised as really existing? If we start from the premisses of such a philosophical view, Freedom cannot be established. Those, therefore, who decide for the denial of it have always had logical consistency on their side. It is also well known how much they are accustomed to plume themselves on that consistency, and with what

an air of superiority they look down on the popular prejudice as to Freedom. However, the facts on which the assertion of Freedom is based have hitherto proved so powerful, that it has not been possible to bring about a general denial of it. It does not do to explain these facts as being simply an illusion of consciousness. Certainly the main argument of those who defend Freedom, viz. the appeal to the universal conviction of men, to the feeling of Freedom which everywhere exists, is not yet in itself decisive. For why should it be impossible that we have an error there, seeing that there are, we must admit, so many widespread errors? But the facts of *moral* life prevent the denial of Freedom from finding vent. In the feeling of responsibility there exists a fact which always urges men anew to assert Freedom: most people cannot resist the impression that the denial of it signifies not much less than the degradation of human action to the level of mere occurrences in nature, or than a denial of that on which chiefly rests the quality which constitutes the dignity of man and distinguishes him above the other living creatures. They seek, therefore, to do justice to these facts, and in some way to maintain the existence of Freedom. Only, in doing so they end in contradicting their own premisses, which logically lead to the denial of Freedom.

The fact, therefore, is that on the standpoint of theoretical Idealism, one *must*, when he faces the problem of Freedom, become involved in a contradiction. Either the premisses of the standpoint are carried out consistently to the end; in that case one runs into contradiction with the facts. Or else one seeks to do

justice to the latter; in that case there is no avoiding the contradiction of one's own premisses. Therefore I have maintained that for this standpoint the problem is insoluble.

Now in such cases there are, of course, all sorts of loopholes and plausible middle courses. And when the subject of Freedom is treated, ample use is made of these if it is made anywhere. Here, as elsewhere, they appear under the title of a "deeper" apprehension of the problem, a deepening which then passes over into a happy solution of it. In particular, it is usual to speak with a certain depreciation of formal Freedom, of the *liberum arbitrium.* This is readily abandoned; but what is preserved and proved is the reality of Freedom in some "deeper" sense: true Freedom is said to be meant, which consists in the agreement of man with his Idea, or which has its essence in the fact that man becomes independent of all external powers, and now depends only on the Moral Ideas which emerge in himself, in the deepest seat within his soul. However, what all this amounts to is simply that people throw dust in this way in their own eyes and in the eyes of others. In truth, all who speak thus sacrifice Freedom with the Determinists for consistency of principle, but seek to conceal from themselves the conflict with the facts which thence arises, by going in all the more energetically for something else which is also designated by the name of "Freedom," a name possessing many significations. By means of such experiments the problem itself is not solved, but still remains just the problem it was. And I am sure I require only to indicate the fact that there is no difference occasioned here by the

special conclusions of Kant as to Intelligible Freedom. No one will give out that these are a solution of the problem; at most we can discover in them an attempt to prove the relative right of the two opposed theses, and in that way to reconcile them for practical use.

Here we can only get along if the standpoint is simply given up. With it there disappears the old statement of the question, which conceives Freedom as an exception from the causal connection of things and processes. Then in that way there comes to be room for a correct statement of the question, one which makes an approximate solution of the problem possible. Or, to express the point more correctly, there comes to be room for an unprejudiced inquiry as to whether Freedom is a fact, and what more particularly is the character of it.

With these observations the task is now discharged which we set before ourselves in this chapter. The origin of the traditional method of theoretical speculation in a correct idea and a false estimate of human knowledge has been proved. Further, we have clearly realised that at the present day the combination of positive science with philosophical speculation contained in that method simply injures both sides, and therefore, too, the most important interests of humanity, while it does not in any way benefit them. In fine, it has been brought out that the fundamental problems of philosophy must remain unsolved so long as this standpoint is adhered to. From all this we may draw the conclusion *that the method is false*, that another has to take its place, one which starts with the primacy of the Will in our self-consciousness and of the practical Reason in our philosophical speculation.

CHAPTER IV.

THE PROOF OF CHRISTIANITY.

The Conditions of Proof—The Christian idea of the Kingdom of God the idea of the Chief Good which answers to Reason — The Proof of Christianity the Proof of the faith reposed in the Christian Revelation—Indirect confirmation of the result—The function of Dogmatics.

In the early Church, Apologetics simply adopted the methods of proof which were found ready to hand, and by means of them sought to prove the truth of Christianity. That course was necessary if anything was to be accomplished at all. And this necessity settled the matter so long as the same presuppositions from which sprang the methods in question governed the mental life and the scientific enterprise of the Christian nations. But now *the positive science* of modern times has made itself independent of those presuppositions; its procedure and its mode of argumentation have gradually become entirely different. In consequence of that, the traditional methods of proof in vogue in Apologetics have also come to be shaken. And we cannot be surprised that in more than one respect that has proved to be prejudicial to Christian truth and its general prevalence; at least its connection with the older scientific tradition is so intimate that the official form of Christian truth, ecclesiastical dogma, is to a vast extent determined

by that tradition. At the present day there is the more specific evil that the remodelled basal conception on which the imposing enterprise of modern science rests is not yet by any means consistently maintained to the end by science itself: it is supposed, no doubt, that one must and that one can reject those inferences which take us beyond experience, but within the province of the empirical sciences the old prejudices are often allowed to remain; and on this basis there is frequently developed a pseudo-philosophy which undertakes to oust Christianity and to occupy the place it has hitherto assumed, and which, however, as may well be conceived, is unable to effect that object. On the other hand, in Christian Apologetics itself the centre of gravity has been disturbed. Apologetics is now bent on defending those presuppositions on which the traditional methods depend, and to which the Christian faith accommodated itself in the early Church because they were the methods generally recognised. In other words, what was at first the *means* of defence has now become principally the *object* of it. But then not as if this position of matters was obvious to all and was recognised by all. What binds men to the old Apologetic method is a conception of Christianity which is inseparably connected with it, one which is distorted, no doubt, but nevertheless largely governs men's minds still even in the Evangelical Church.

The fact is, however, that either the old view of science is the correct one, the view which assigns the decision regarding truth to the so-called *Laws of Thought*, or the view on which the enterprise of

modern science is based, according to which the *facts* brought to our knowledge by experience decide as to truth. In the former case we find, further, that it is impossible to call in question on good grounds the method of traditional Apologetics. If the truth of our scientific knowledge within the sphere of experience is grounded on the so-called Laws of Thought, there is no reason to be found for denying that their application even beyond experience, the connection with the latter being always, of course, maintained, can lead to certain results. In the other case, the view which is taken as the basis must also be really carried out, and in that case as well there comes to be room for the proof of Christianity, and that, too, not a reduced and transformed Christianity, but the original faith, that which was restored at the Reformation. For there is room for a proof which starts with the relative character of all scientific knowledge, with the perception that the truth of the Christian faith *lies in a different sphere from that of positive science.* Nothing, on the other hand, is more unfounded or suffers in a higher degree from imperfection and distortion, than the view that prevails at this day among large classes of people, according to which the old prejudices may be cherished in empirical science, but the Apologetic use which Theology makes of them may be rejected as unscientific.

We found that only the modern view consistently carried out answers to the truth, and that view we recognise *without reserve.* Thence follows the requirement that we should make a corresponding alteration in the method of proof in Apologetics. The difference,

however, between the method adopted by the early Church and that which is advocated here is shown especially in *one* point. On our procedure what appears the principal matter is the proof that as a fact and on grounds of reason the highest knowledge is achieved as a Faith which has its norm in practice. That is, it is shown that the Christian faith, developed from its own fundamental idea and determined only by it, is *formally* just what under all circumstances a highest grade of knowledge alone can be. Then on this basis it is attempted to furnish proof that the Christian faith and no other is the *rational* faith, a proof which now presents comparatively few remaining difficulties, and in particular neither transforms nor diminishes its object. On the old method, on the other hand, the presupposition is accepted that the highest knowledge is something quite different from a Faith which has its norm in practice, and something much higher. Here it comes to be the chief concern to show that such highest knowledge can be developed out of the Christian faith, an attempt which inevitably involves a transformation and diminution of Christian truth.

From these considerations we discover at the same time the form in which the problem now awaiting solution presents itself to us in the first instance. What remains for us is the second of the two points mentioned above, viz. the proof that it is precisely the Christian faith which is the faith answering to reason. But from all that has already been said this proof can only be furnished by showing the principle of that faith, viz. the Christian idea of the Kingdom of God, to be the rational and absolute idea of the chief good

of humanity. In this demonstration there is implicitly contained the proof for the truth of the faith which is dominated by that idea, the faith in God and His relation to the world, to man and his history. But with regard to the idea itself, *i.e.* the object of proof, I can refer to the representation of the Christian Religion formerly offered by me. We are dealing not with a truth still remaining to be discovered, but with a *given* truth. That this is in fact *the truth*, and approves itself as such to human reason, is what has now to be shown.

We begin by realising the peculiar character of the undertaking, the difficulties which are connected with it, and the limits within which the problem can be solved.

The difficulty, briefly stated, consists in this, that a truth has to be proved to possess *absolute validity*, in the recognition and establishment of which a *judgment of value* is inevitably concerned, *i.e.* a judgment which is always dependent in some measure on *personal* and *historical* considerations. There is nothing to alter in this situation itself. The proof as such has no other purpose and can pursue no other aim than that of bringing into recognition the absolute validity of the idea requiring to be proved. On the other hand, the judgment that this or that is the chief good of men *is* at the same time in every case simply a judgment of value; the mind's freedom *is* concerned in originating it. So too it must in some way be dependent on historical circumstances. It is only to the judgments of value which spring from the inborn natural Will that that does not apply. But no one will mean to

affirm that *these* furnish a sufficient basis for the judgment as to the chief good of humanity. Consequently there is nothing to alter in the situation in which the difficulty that has been mentioned is rooted. That difficulty cannot be removed by showing that it does not exist. It only remains for us, if the whole argumentation is not to be vitiated by the non-observance of it, to take account of it from the first, and to ask what follows from it with reference to the proof which has to be furnished.

What follows is that the proof can only be furnished within certain limits. We will discuss these in succession.

In the first place, it is clear that the proof for a thesis on the subject of the chief good can never become, strictly speaking, a *demonstrative* proof. That is, it cannot be of such a kind that it compels all men to recognise it even against their will.

Now undoubtedly the sphere in which it is found to be possible to attain such compulsion by means of proof is limited even within the domain of positive science. Here I do not consider pure Mathematics. For if it is able to furnish such proofs, and has from the first enjoyed great respect owing to this advantage, that is connected as was previously shown with the peculiar nature of its subject-matter, a peculiarity which implies, on the other hand, that its formulæ are in the first instance only hypothetical truths. It is only in their application to nature and to the investigation of it that these conclusions become truths in the stricter sense of the word. And this of course occurs not without a certain arbitrariness being involved in the

process of formulating them—judged from the point of view of the object. Nevertheless, with regard to these truths there is neither doubt nor dispute among those who concern themselves with them. Wherefore it can be said that in Physical Science demonstrative proofs are possible so far as the influence of Mathematics reaches there and proves its warrant by the results attained with the aid of the latter. Where, however, Mathematics does not extend, or where, as the case may be, the possibility of its application becomes doubtful, the point also invariably appears in the *general theories* of Physical Science where, owing to the arbitrariness which comes in, the consideration of *suitability for one's purpose* must partly be taken into account, and where a subjective element contributes its share in the diverging judgments passed on this matter: there is then an end of demonstrative proofs. Above all, in the sphere of History one must, as a rule, be contented with more (perhaps very much) or less probability; demonstrative proofs and results corresponding to them are to be found there only conditionally. Even in positive science, therefore, the possibility of such proofs is limited. Here too there necessarily remains for the Will a greater influence on research and its conclusions than is probably supposed in many cases or as a rule.

The question for us here is whether it is consonant with the reality to appeal to this fact for the justification of the view, that for the highest knowledge too no demonstrative proofs strictly speaking can be furnished. That appeal is made in the work on Christian Faith and Human Freedom which has hitherto unfortunately remained incomplete, and which has met with much

and well-merited commendation. At least the author of it lays great stress on this fact, viz. in a discussion which serves as an introduction to his dissertations on the duty of having faith.[1] But I do not believe this is right. Those defects of which mention was made, the limits which are fixed for demonstrative proof in positive science, can be conceived for the greater part as imperfections which science is in a position to rectify, although only by an endless approximation. And where that is not possible, as, *e.g.*, with respect to many historical problems, that, it must be said, is not implied by the nature of the case, but *by the insufficiency of our means* for mastering the facts. On the other hand, the case is quite different with the highest knowledge, or with the proof for an idea of the chief good as the principle of final knowledge. The fact that this proof cannot become a demonstrative one, is implied *by the nature of the case, not by the want of sufficient means.* Or if it might be objected that here too it must be said we have limits which are fixed for human finite weakness, whereas faith conceives divine knowledge as independent of these, we have to say that these limits are connected with human nature as such. If we bring in divine knowledge for comparison, they are due to the fact that man is simply man and not God. No one, it seems to me, can fail to see on closer examination that there is a difference existing here. In the one case we arrive at no demonstrative proof, because the grounds of proof which we can adduce are insufficient, while they can very well be conceived as

[1] *Der christliche Glaube und die menschliche Freiheit*, i. (2nd ed.), Gotha, 1881, p. 113 ff.

possibly existing to a sufficient extent, and we can often expect from continued investigation that it will supply the defects which are found as yet. In the other case we arrive at no demonstrative proof, because we have to do at the same time with a *decision of the mind's freedom*, a decision which no person can be compelled to come to by such arguments as involve constraint and establish necessity in the purely intellectual sphere.

We decline, therefore, to appeal for the support of our position to the circumstance that elsewhere too in science there is often a want of demonstrative proofs. But we do appeal to the fact that never as yet has any one established that highest knowledge which he declared for with such proofs. And further, the most noted representatives of philosophy, viz. the speculative philosophers, have frequently themselves acknowledged without any doubt that here we depend for conviction and the recognition of truth partly on the *Will* and the mind's freedom. If, on the other hand, modern philosophers, yielding to the overmastering impression produced by the results of our modern Physical Science, think they can attain something similar to these in philosophy, or at least that they ought to strive for such an object, they are, as has already been said, simply chasing a phantom. For mankind there is *no highest knowledge that can be established by demonstrative proofs*. Here there is only a species of truth that must be admitted above all by the Will.

In connection with this comes the other truth that no one can be obliged to seek or to recognise a highest grade

of knowledge at all. I mean, it is not merely impossible to furnish a demonstrative proof for a *definite* idea of the chief good and for the faith that is developed from it, but also if any one declares that he means to set aside *all* such ideas generally, nothing can be made out in opposition to his judgment on purely intellectual grounds. Of course I do not think here of an unreasoning self-will that refuses to enter into these topics from mere waywardness. I think of those, and there are people of the kind, who recognise no other truth than such as is made good with all the resources of rigorous science, and therefore, so far as that sort of answer to the highest questions is unattainable, relegate this whole sphere to the subjective judgment of each individual, and want simply to exclude it from scientific discussion. He who feels the need may seek to form a theory of the world for himself; he who feels none may omit to do so, and no one can expect him to look for something that he can dispense with and for which he experiences no need.

Obviously this is only another side of the question previously discussed. Suppose it were possible to compel every one who is sufficiently equipped with intelligence and attainments, to recognise a highest grade of knowledge or at all events the possibility of it, then in that which compels him to admit *this much* there would also necessarily be supplied the connecting links of a proof for a *definite* idea of the chief good, and so for a *definite* form of the highest knowledge. Conversely it forms the presupposition of *such* a proof that every one can be compelled to enter on the question generally. The two aspects of the matter are

therefore most closely connected with each other. And further, it is in the last-named of these that the real limit to what is attainable in our question lies; what was first discussed is only the consequence of the finding here. We enter therefore somewhat more minutely into this point, and discuss what can be said against such a refusal to seek a highest grade of knowledge at all. And in doing so we connect our remarks with a previous observation on the subject.

When it had been shown in the chapter on the Primacy of Practical Reason that theoretical speculation has to be rejected, and that, on the other hand, a speculative philosophy which has its norm in practice is possible as an objective function and is also what corresponds to the real nature of our knowledge, I did not draw from that the conclusion that consequently the latter path must be traversed. I rather pointed to the fact that there followed from all that in the first instance only the hypothetical result: *if there is to be a highest grade of knowledge*, it can only be reached on this path. And the discussion we have been engaged in since then has not brought us farther forward in this respect. True, it has served, as I think, for the confirmation of that result in all its aspects. In particular, there is a confirmation of it implied in the perception that it has invariably been an idea of the chief good that the highest knowledge, where such was proclaimed, has been based upon. Only, whether *there is to be* a highest species of knowledge at all is still the question as before. And we have now frankly recognised that one cannot be *compelled* to seek such knowledge. There is no benefit to be

got from cherishing the fiction which supposes that is the case, whereas we must admit it is not so in truth. If this fiction is given up and the reality accepted *as it actually stands*, that has the advantage that now those reasons for entering on the question of the highest knowledge can be enforced which really prove to be of weight, and we do not operate with reasons which are from the first without effect.

But what sort of reasons then are they? What can be maintained in opposition to those who decline to seek a highest grade of knowledge? There are three arguments, I think, that may be enforced.

The *first* is this. The rejection of the highest knowledge in every form rests on the requirement that it must be possible for such knowledge, if it should merit recognition, to be exhibited and established in a *demonstrative* fashion. Or perhaps it is still more accurate to say that the two things, that rejection and this requirement, follow concurrently from one and the same fundamental view with regard to knowledge and science. If, therefore, both were to be warranted and to have a claim to possess absolute validity, this fundamental view would have to be incontestable. In truth, however, that is by no means the case. For the view which is found here at bottom is simply no other than that which, as we have seen, has proved erroneous in every regard, the view, viz., which supposes that that relative independence[1] as respects our Will which is possessed by our knowledge, and which is doubtless attainable, is of a definitive and absolute character. Looked at closely, it has itself the basal motive of

[1] Read *Unabhängigkeit* in the original.

speculative philosophy as its presupposition, the judgment that in knowledge lies the chief good. Or at least the requirements which are here made of knowledge, the predicates with which it is adorned, follow simply from this presupposition. And *a historical connection* exists there at all events, although the original stately vessel which with swelling sails seeks the eternal haven has dwindled to a modest boat which pushes forward aimlessly on the endless plain. But as the view of science which is found at bottom does not represent the truth, this rejection of the highest knowledge which is derived from that view is equally far from answering to it.

The *second* point which we have to advance is connected in the closest manner with the first. The rejection of every theory of the world which bears on things in their totality is as much an affair of the mind's freedom as the decision to seek and to adopt such a theory. Or, to be more exact, the presuppositions on which the rejection rests are not facts possessing absolute validity, but spring first of all from an estimate of such facts which is itself derived from the mind's freedom. Now on this, I think, *the greatest stress* would have to be laid. Those whom we contend with here conceive the matter differently, and with the justification of their conception stands or falls their judgment on the subject. For their representation of the matter is that they go a good stretch of the way in company with all others, as far, viz., as established science extends; but then the point comes where they go no farther, because the right way on which alone it is possible to proceed at all comes here to an

end—whereas we others continue our way into vacancy, and now find ourselves in a trackless waste filled with fancies. But this conception is incorrect, because it rests on the false presupposition as to knowledge that was referred to. In truth, *all knowledge in the last resort* is subordinate to the practical purposes of life. Thus alone can it be justified in its real character; only on this basis is a tenable organisation of it possible; and it is only *by starting from this general view* that we can arrive at a decision of the particular question whether we ought to seek a highest grade of knowledge or not. The question is not whether the knowledge of the world which we have can in accordance with its own inherent laws be extended to a highest species of knowledge. If this were the question, it would of course have to be answered in the negative, and there would be nothing for us but to let resignation be the last word. But the question rather is, whether it is more rational, starting *from the practical position in the world* which we assume, and which is the organising principle of *all* our knowledge, to strive to reach a *highest* species of knowledge in addition to the rest, or to refrain from doing so. And here we affirm that the former course is the rational one. To choose it does not mean to spring obstinately and thoughtlessly into vacancy at the point where the way really ceases, but it means *to continue and to traverse to the end* the way which already shows manifold turnings in its progress through the sciences, and to do so in the manner for which one is prepared by these previous turnings. He who fails to do this remains without reason standing in the middle of the

way. But in particular—whether the one course is followed or the other, it is equally *a decision of the mind's freedom.* The only question is always which decision reason finally pronounces for. And here reason stands entirely on the affirmative, not on the negative side.

Finally, it has to be said in the *third* place that in a certain way there is now a real obligation to seek a highest grade of knowledge. If we admit that that is not the case, we have the *individual* in view while we do so, and the individual too apart from all historical and social connections, without which of course he would not even be what he is. In fact the conclusion of the matter must be that the *individual,* if he simply wishes, is in a position to abstract from a highest grade of knowledge. But *society* as such cannot dispense with it. As its condition at a given time depends not least on the ideas of God and the world which are operative in it, it is also impossible for it to develop further *without such a circle of ideas recognised as true and possessing absolute validity.* To that circle of ideas the arrangement of all the relations of society itself is traced back in the last resort, and according to the form it takes the well-being of society and the progress of historical development are sought in totally different directions. Though therefore ever so many individuals may stand aloof and reserve for themselves the *rôle* of the uninterested critical observer, in the community there will always nevertheless, in the future as hitherto, be such a circle of ideas. Here it must of necessity always be formed anew, because the existence of the community as a whole

depends on it. In this larger theatre of public life the question is not as in that of the individual mind, whether this group of ideas should exist or not; rather it is in existence, and the question is simply *which* group of the kind is the *true and rational one.* On the day, however, when there are no longer any such ideas, when there are no longer any believing hearts and convinced minds adhering to them, there is no longer what we call social order either, and with society itself Chaos will then have swallowed up those critical observers of it likewise. *In short, in the historical existence of a community which has risen to the stage of civilisation and culture, that obligation is implied which we miss in the mental life of the individual.* But then does not the obligation hold good indirectly with regard to the latter also? For must he not say to himself that he with his existence depends on that of the people or society to which he belongs? It exists for him *not* like the intellectual obligation which makes him recognise a given fact or assent to a mathematical conclusion, but in the form in which obligation exists in general in the sphere of mental freedom—as *duty,* arising from the fact that the individual does not exist without the whole.

It scarcely requires to be added that this kind of obligation corresponds to the general view of knowledge and science previously set forth by us, in the same way as intellectual obligation, which however does not exist, would correspond to the opposite erroneous view. Only the point still requires to be mentioned, that it cannot well be seen how those who assume towards the highest knowledge in every

form an attitude of negation mean to settle the question of *Ethics*. It may be presumed without hesitation that they are neither minded to exclude this whole subject from the circle of their knowledge and their science, nor yet mistaken as to the necessity of regulating the life of the individual as well as that of the community by moral ideals. But then is there a *demonstrative knowledge* of that subject? The attempt is made, as, *e.g.*, by Laas in the work on Idealism and Positivism several times mentioned above,[1] to arrive at an interpretation of moral processes by looking at man's social and historical development. Good. But the fact must be recognised that that development has been accomplished only with the co-operation in a variety of ways of a highest type of knowledge—granting that that knowledge may be merely imaginary. Can that interpretation then issue without contradiction in the assertion that such a circle of ideas is of no consequence for the moral life, or that it can even be dispensed with? And above all, how can it be disputed that in the formation and establishment of a definite code of moral legislation we are concerned with something quite different from what we have in the objective interpretation of man's moral life and its development, that in the former case, viz., the result depends on *a decision of the mind's freedom?* But then is not the bounding line thereby passed, regarding which it is affirmed that the sober-minded man who seeks scientific certainty must not pass it? In fact I cannot see but that the person who renounces

[1] In the second volume, 1882.

the highest knowledge and yet recognises *Ethics as a science* gets entangled in a contradiction. That contradiction will be avoided only by him who clearly realises that science in its progress through the kingdom of reality comes naturally to the point where it must concede to that thought of Reason which determines Value, and is no longer, therefore, framed by compulsion, an influence on its work. But in that case, too, such person can have no further scruple in recognising the question of the highest knowledge as the natural consummation of science, and in endeavouring to get a settlement of that question which will answer to reason.

But perhaps it seems hazardous to base so important a matter as the highest knowledge on considerations of this kind, such as recommend the intelligent man to take, as it were, what is on the whole the rational and advisable course, and not decline to seek a highest type of knowledge. The theologian might feel that he was reminded by that counsel of the ratiocination of the old Supernaturalists, in whose case the plerophory of faith in revelation had been lost, and who endeavoured to replace it by an intelligent balancing of the reasons for and against. It might seem as if in a similar manner there were offered here only a meagre compensation for the full belief in a highest type of knowledge which marked a former period. And from that it might be inferred finally that the matter will be as far from resting to-day in such a makeshift as it was formerly. However, the case is in truth quite different. If our conception of the highest knowledge is the correct one, the conviction of its truth, where

it exists, is one *based on practice, i.e.* the element which gives the final decision and the purely theoretical discussion are incommensurable. The conviction itself is all the more firm and unswerving that that conviction is not merely an objective view which is held to be true, but something which is connected with one's own personal life, supporting and dominating it. The considerations which we have put forward just now are meant to do anything but establish the proof of the highest knowledge. Their theme is not the highest knowledge itself, but the nature of its origin; their purpose is simply, *so far as the objective discussion reaches at all in this matter*, to repel the objection which is raised by many people at the present day against a highest species of knowledge in *whatever* form. And inasmuch as they issue in the conclusion that it is a *duty* to seek a highest species of knowledge, they contain themselves a manifest indication of the *true moral roots of the conviction* which alone suffices here. And of course with all this it has always to be considered that the highest knowledge is conceived as of such a kind that it becomes intelligible at the same time as a law for the whole government of life.

Hitherto we have been dealing with the limit fixed for the proof of a definite idea of the chief good by the fact that the recognition of such an idea cannot really be secured without the mind's freedom being concerned in the process. A second limit which was likewise mentioned already, springs from the fact that the judgment which has to be proved in regard to the chief good will be no less one which is determined

invariably by *historical* considerations, indeed must be.

The fact as such is obvious. So too we cannot fail to see the connection with each other in which the two factors are placed. Just because the judgment is an affair of the mind's freedom it must at the same time be one which is determined by historical considerations, since in this sphere only the elementary fundamental judgments are not so determined, whereas all that distinguishes man bears the stamp of *historical growth*. But the limit to the proof for the chief good which arises from that fact is this, that he who is to be receptive of the proof and who is to recognise the chief good as such must have reached a definite stage of historical development, and must occupy a definite position there. Where this proviso is not secured, the proof which appeals to the reason is also out of place. There conviction can be gained not by tranquil development, but only by a breach with the past. Or conviction can be produced in such a person only in such wise that through it he gains at the same time new standing-ground in history.

Here too we can refer to the fact that the case is similar with regard to all our knowledge. Both as respects its extent and its formal presentation knowledge has been very different at different times. So too it is characterised by constant change and progress. Many propositions which a schoolboy comprehends without difficulty to-day would have been rejected a hundred years ago as untrue and chimerical by the most learned person. Consequently all knowledge, every proof, is dependent on the historical position of

those who concern themselves with it. And here the analogy could not be rejected so unhesitatingly as in the relation previously discussed (p. 310). It is true there is always *a certain difference* here too, yet only so far as the other relation spoken of comes in at the same time. If we disregard that, the fact, I mean, that the mind's freedom is concerned in the decision regarding a highest form of knowledge, there is really a similarity to be found. For if the truth should be insisted on that in other spheres certainly, every one can become qualified by sufficient information to comprehend their content, it is equally true that it must be possible for the highest knowledge too to be brought home to every one. The difference is that in the one case *information* is necessary for the end in view, and in the other case *education*. But that is no other than the general distinction which has already been treated.

But here we can also appeal still more confidently than we do to this analogy to the fact that a highest species of knowledge, wherever such has been proclaimed and accepted, has always borne the stamp of its time. It has always been dependent on the great currents of the civilised life which has been developed in history. In mentioning these limits we do not therefore assert something that proves to be a special drawback to the method of proof here proposed, but we point to a *fact*, something that has always and everywhere held good, and can be evaded by no one whatever method he may follow. We point to it in the belief that nothing is more dangerous than to have to do with illusions in this matter, to ascribe, viz., to the

arguments a demonstrative force which they do not have and from the nature of the case cannot have. When that is done the result is only that the force of the demonstration is sought at the wrong point, and is in consequence paralysed.

But now within those limits which have just been explained it is possible after all to arrive at true universality, *i.e.* general truths. These limits when closely looked at signify simply *that general truths as found in historical life are given in a different way from what is seen in the case of the knowledge which is referable to the Understanding,* that which has sensuous nature as its object. Now, in the proof which has to be presented here we are referred to historical life. It follows from all that has already been said that the connecting links for the proof lie in that life, and must be sought only in it. That idea of the chief good, we say, is the rational and absolutely valid idea, in which the different aspirations set before us by the historical life of men reach their completion, their consummation. And further, they must reach their consummation in such wise that they interpenetrate each other and bring each other to completion, and that it is obviously impossible ever to get beyond the goal thus set up, because human things *can* have no higher goal than that.

We are not concerned, therefore, with what the individual might be inclined from his personal disposition and mode of life to regard as the chief good, but the question is what sort of chief good can be recognised from the historical development of humanity *as that which it acknowledges.* The individual has the

duty incumbent on him of submitting to such knowledge—whether it is the further development of a capacity which in his case is in a backward state that is needful for this end, or familiarisation with something to which in the first instance he was a stranger. In the end the alternative is *whether we will allow there is reason in the history of our race or not.* In his actual procedure one who deserves to be listened to at all decides without question in the former sense. For it will invariably be found that he recognises an order of good things in which those marked by historical growth are ranked above those of the natural Will. But in that case it further appears that he remains standing in the middle of the way if he rejects the chief good which indicates the terminal point of history. Reason demands of him that he should inquire regarding it and make it his own.

We will now look at what can be made out with regard to this chief good by following the way just indicated. To be more exact, we shall have to prove that only *the Christian idea of the Kingdom of God as the chief good of humanity* answers to the requirements which must be made of the true, rational, absolutely valid idea of the chief good.

No one will expect that this proof will be composed of new and hitherto unknown ideas. The truth which has to be proved or defended is not new; it is Christian truth as it answers to Holy Scripture and the Evangelical confession, and therefore also as it is living—no matter although with many incongruous additions—in the faith of Evangelical Christendom. And now,

though the changes may be great and manifold which the mental life of men passes through, certain elementary features yet remain the same. But what can be proved to be absolutely valid, to be permanent and eternal truth, will have its connecting links in those very features of man's mental life which continue the same, not merely in the varying forms of that life. One, therefore, who would have something entirely new to bring forward in this matter would have the presumption of truth not in his favour but against him. And so, of course, what we intend to set forth now, touches truths which have long since been known and recognised—only the *mode of connection* has become entirely different, the connection, viz., between the mental life which all developed people share and the truths of the Christian faith which have to be proved to these same people. On the other hand, that again is a change which no well-informed person will mean to regard as nothing or only as something of no importance. Possibly the transformation which floats before our mind as that required in this mode of connection is not the correct one; that is a question by itself. At present I mean only that if it is correct it must not be held perchance to be of no importance, because in the new connection it is truth which is old and long since known that is presented in the end. For as regards the proof of Christianity, the *proof as such*, everything turns in the end on that connection; it depends on it whether the proof is valid and capable of awakening conviction. But if the difference between the mode of connection which formerly prevailed and that adopted here is to be described in a word, it is

this : instead of starting from our knowledge of the world to seek the First Cause and the Final Purpose of it, we start from *History* and inquire regarding the chief good of men, having acquired by all our previous discussions the right to make this altered statement of the question. Thence also it follows next *in how far* what we have to say will be something already known, and in how far it will be something new. The mental and historical life of men is a part of the world, and to the Christian theologian or philosopher it must always have seemed the most important part of it; consequently also he has never in his argumentations been able or willing to abstract from it : in so far our exposition of the subject must touch the traditional treatment. But what was considered by tradition only as a part, and always ran the risk of being pushed by the other part, viz. the world of sense, into the background —a circumstance to which the whole weakness of traditional philosophical Apologetics is due—is for us the whole ; the world of sense is considered only mediately as the theatre of our life and of history : in so far the connection in which the familiar ideas appear is different.

Accordingly it is to *History* that we have to direct our whole attention. Now, if we search for a word or notion by which the general nature of human history can be expressed, I can name no other than the word or notion *Life*. And further, I understand by it the alternation familiar to every one of want and enjoyment, effort and satisfaction—including every pleasure and every pain connected with these. For human history on the whole and in detail is nothing but the effort to

obtain perfect satisfaction for all the cravings which are inherent in man's nature or which are developed in him as the case may be. This effort is common to all without exception; it guarantees that the thread of history does not break off so long as the physical conditions render human existence on the earth possible; it binds the individual to the community and the community to the individual. Perhaps many a one holds it superfluous even to mention so self-evident a truth, or at all events to emphasise it. But no one can deny the fact itself that this and nothing else is the nature of human history. For our part, we take it as our starting-point because it makes clear from the first what significance accrues to the consideration of the *good* in the study of historical life. What we call good is simply what promotes man's welfare or is known as a means for that purpose. While, therefore, the conception of history is a general one if it is viewed as life in the sense previously explained, the scope which there is for the notion of the good in the language used regarding it is equally wide. And this first and most general conception teaches already that it must be *a chief good* which gives unity and connection to history, if it is not to be an illusion altogether to speak of these, to take into consideration the history of our race as a whole.

Now, if we ask what sort of chief good it is for which the reason of men as it is recognisable in history testifies, the first answer is to the effect *that such a chief good is not to be found in the world.* The chief good must secure *perfect and unconditional* satisfaction for the human soul, beyond which nothing

further is asked or sought. The *chief good* must do that—*i.e.* what we mean by these words is simply what does so; and what fails to do so no longer deserves the name, loses irrevocably the high esteem expressed by it. But there is nothing in the world that secures such satisfaction. Everything in the world is relative and conditional. That is true not merely of the knowledge which we are able to attain; it is true equally or in a still higher degree of everything earthly in which we can seek the satisfaction of our need of life. True, nothing is more common than the error that the disappointment which daily attends us will some time come to an end. The power of imagination when roused always rocks man anew in the vain belief that here or there, in this thing or in that if it is only gained, final satisfaction can be found. But as often as that happens it proves to be an illusion. In *this* respect too there is no great difference between lower and higher, between natural and moral goods. In particular there looms before all of them alike the doom of everything earthly, viz. transitoriness, the ever-existing possibility that *one* moment may annihilate what has been acquired whether in the way of possessions or powers in the course of long years. Nothing in the world, we repeat therefore, can secure definitive and perfect satisfaction; there is no chief good in the world.

To this, it is true, it might be objected that all that is needful is to see through the natural illusion and to adapt oneself to it. One must cease, it might be said, to strive for the unattainable, and must seek one's sufficiency in what is attainable: thus the wise man

will compass his happiness without requiring a chief good; if fate proves to be cruel there remains for him a worthy submission to the inevitable. Indeed, it must not be denied that in particular cases a view of that kind can be realised. Only if that is to be the case a series of conditions must be suitable. The sober temperament must prevail; the native (hereditary) capacities and inclinations must awaken a propensity for mental rather than sensuous enjoyment, for social rather than solitary life; the vicissitudes of fortune must be confined within certain limits. And what does such an isolated case prove where it turns out to be real? Above everything, as we see at once, it does not prove that a chief good is to be found in the world. It rather involves the abandonment of everything of that kind. It is equally far from proving that that abandonment can become the rule or an absolute principle among men. Only very rarely do those conditions concur. We shall also be warranted in affirming that that happens or is possible only in a community which *as a whole* has an idea of the chief good as the aim of life. What is possible in the particular case cannot become the rule for the community, because as soon as that happened even the individual case would cease to be possible. We have refrained throughout from introducing arguments the point of which is to prove this or that, whether religion or a theory of the world affecting things in their totality, to belong necessarily to the nature of man. We have done so knowing that these are matters of personal freedom, in regard to which it is not consonant with truth to speak of necessity, or better, of obligation.

The reverse side is that we also reject as wide of the mark every counter argument which is supported by isolated cases. Only what holds good *as a rule for a community* is a historical truth of general significance. And if we look to that, we find that it is not the common practice of men to abandon the quest of a chief good, although it is not possible to discover anything of the kind in the world.

We formerly became acquainted with the situation now depicted as that in which religion arises. In fact, so far as the chief good is not offered in the world, and the craving for it nevertheless exists, it can only be sought outside the world as something which is above it. Or else a Pessimistic temper intervenes, which casts aside all happiness and all good things as an illusion, condemns the world as the worst conceivable, and recognises in non-existence the highest good there is for man.

There is scarcely any other phenomenon so widespread in the history of the human race as Religion. The people may be counted, if there are any at all, who have *never* felt a religious impulse. And if now, as is undoubtedly the case in the lower stages of religious activity, the craving which reaches beyond the world is not yet evinced with undivided interest or even as the predominant aim; if instead of the chief good which is above the world it is in the first instance the protection and advancement of life in the world that men chiefly strive for as the blessing of religion, we may yet in surveying the whole field affirm that from its nature man's religious craving is completed only in his aspiration after that good which is

above the world.[1] But further, it would not be correct to assume that aspiration of the latter kind is totally wanting in the imperfect religions. It exists as an indefinite impulse, and asserts itself in obscure feelings which play round religious faith and action. And there is something else which falls to be considered besides. We already mentioned the fact that we always yield anew so easily to the illusion that we can find full satisfaction in some earthly good or enjoyment. Indeed, the desire to obtain such satisfaction is in the last resort the real motor principle of our finite life. But then is there not an element implied in that which is of a religious nature, an element with which, as soon as one looks out for divine help, though it were for the earthly life only, feelings of a really religious description are connected? We must not let our attention be engrossed with the mechanical form assumed by this connection and often assigned to it in worship; we must keep before our view the original situation itself, from which all else is ultimately derived. But if this is done, it further appears with special clearness how *in all religion* the craving for a chief good is operative from the first. Apart, too, from that it cannot be doubted that only by disengaging and satisfying *this* craving does one attain the goal which religion from the first aspires to.

The other possibility is that one despairs of the world and abandons himself to Pessimism. In fact, a Pessimistic temper is a very wide-spread phenomenon in human history; it recurs at all periods and in the

[1] *Das Wesen der christlichen Religion*, p. 70. (Cf. the note at p. 8, vol. i. of this book.)

most different strata of society. And here I do not consider the religious Pessimism found on Indian soil. Undoubtedly that has rather to be subsumed under religion, and to be conceived as one of the forms in which men have striven for a chief good. Nor do I consider the reasoned Pessimism of the philosophical systems. No doubt the appearance of such systems at present, and the approval they receive from many people, show plainly enough what consequences the weakening of the religious spirit inevitably brings in its train. Here, however, what is meant to be emphasised is simply the Pessimism that is *commonly found anywhere*, forming a natural element, as it were, of our mental life. Could there be any one who has never paid his tribute to it? Often we suddenly meet with an expression of it where we least expect it. And that would be the case much more frequently still if it were not one of the most wide-spread conventional falsehoods for a person to simulate happiness and well-being in presence of another. If men's tempers could be delineated at a given moment and combined in a general picture, we would, I believe, one and all of us be astounded and horrified at the dark colour of it. In the historical evidences of the past there is also found a confirmation of what has been said, and here too it is often found where it was least to be expected. We need only think of the well-known utterances of the Greek poets: they weigh all the more that we are accustomed to regard ancient Greece as the place where a lively and steady enjoyment of life has been realised in the most perfect degree. But one who inquires as to the *causes* of this generality and

wide prevalence of such tempers finds sufficient information on the matter from the Pessimistic writers of our time. If, as is of course the case, their calculations as to the proportion of pleasure and pain in the world are erroneous, because there is no standard by which to assess the amounts, yet the material collected by them shows how many permanent causes there are for the Pessimistic temper in man's worldly circumstances and in his organisation, compounded as it is of soul and body.

What follows now from all this? Anything rather than the truth of *philosophical* Pessimism, which makes a temper of the kind the principle of its estimate of the world. For, in the first place, in this way the moral point of view is left out of consideration, though it requires to be attended to above all, where we have to do with a theory of the world which is determined by practice. But in particular it is a contradiction in itself to represent a theory as *rational*, as demanded by reason, the point of which is to proclaim *unreason* as the principle of the world's course as well as of historical development. For that is the position of matters if this Pessimism is right: in that case what rules is the opposite of reason, and every rational interpretation of the world must be given up because such interpretation requires a *positive* principle. We cannot persist in the attempt to conceive the world as a whole and now replace the positive view presupposed in and with that attempt by a negative, as if that were the alternative still open in the case. The alternative is whether such an attempt ought to be made and can be carried out, or whether it must be

abandoned altogether. If now we cannot take the latter course, the verdict is thereby pronounced against Pessimism. Where we have to follow it is in seeing that we do not neglect the facts to which it appeals. The principle of our interpretation of the world must do justice to these facts, unless it is to be refuted forthwith by our actual experience of life. And that leads me to what can be justly inferred from those facts.

Now, that is the refutation of all Optimism such as pronounces the world blessed. Such Optimism, wherever it appears and in whatever form it asserts itself, is refuted by the actual state of things brought to light by Pessimism, and that sharply, incisively, unconditionally. *There is no chief good in the world.* If there is to be such a good it must be conceived and sought as one which is above the world, *i.e.* in the sense of religion—as participation in a life which is not of the world, as participation in the life of God.

Finally, the truth must not remain unnoticed that all systems of speculative philosophy give evidence of this very fact. There is no such system that has not quite spontaneously assumed a *religious character.* The objection may be made, it is true, that that is to be explained by a transference of the name of God to the supreme cause of the world exhibited by philosophy, and proves nothing in behalf of our thesis; the identity of name does not in itself imply an essential affinity with religious faith. Yet that objection would really be applicable only in the case of a philosophical explanation of the world such as the Deism, say, of the period of the *Aufklärung* presents, a system which no

one will give out as being *a speculative system in the proper sense.* Where we have *such a system* it is of a religious character. And no wonder, too. For it rests invariably on an idea of the chief good. Precisely in view of this connection it is all the more evident that a confirmation of our thesis is involved in the fact alluded to: the chief good is above the world, is participation in the life of God.

But the question is whether this definition is enough, taken by itself alone. We have repeatedly mentioned that here and there in the world, in the most diverse spheres of historical life, as soon as culture is sufficiently developed, a piety, a species of faith emerges which has *simply the religious idea as such* as its motive, viz. the insufficiency of the world, and the longing thereby awakened for a life above the world, for divine life. And it appears not merely as a general disposition, but often in very definite forms. One cannot fail to see that it constitutes a real system which seeks to interpret the world and to regulate life, and supplies in the formal sense all that we are accustomed to expect of such a system. It explains the world, teaching that it proceeds eternally from God and eternally returns to God, a return which man fully accomplishes in religion. It prescribes a corresponding rule of life, the most conspicuous element of which is asceticism and renunciation of the world. It indicates the way in which the chief goal or good must be sought and can be attained: the principal matter is the mystical entrance of the soul into itself, to find union there with God. It will be impossible to deny that that is a system which is closed and complete in itself. But again, on the other hand,

it is sufficiently indefinite to admit within its framework materials of thought which are as different as possible, to be able to adapt itself to the most different times and habits of thought. Only in relation to practice is it inflexible. For if anything in the world is judged to be other than a thing whose final purpose is that it may be renounced, it is all over with this piety. But if we ask whether a purely and one-sidedly religious definition of the chief good answers to reason, that means simply that we ask whether *this system* of Mystical Pantheistic Natural Religion, supposing it is taken in that form of it which is spiritually the most sublime, is the highest knowledge which is sought. That we have no objection to make to that conjecture on the *formal* side is understood as a matter of course. The principle of the system is an idea of the chief good; it has originated in the only way in which a highest species of knowledge can and must originate. The question is whether it is *materially* correct, whether *this* idea of the chief good is the rational one.

Now, this question must be *answered unconditionally in the negative*. Rightly understood, the question relates to the full issue of the principle of the system which has just been mentioned again in outline. That we meet with much in it that we have to adopt, though in another form, is understood as a matter of course, for the reason that it is requisite that one should think of the chief good as being above the world, as a good which springs from communion with God. But this *one-sided* insistence on an idea which is right in itself must be unconditionally rejected. And there are no

cogent reasons that can be adduced against that rejection. It is true the system frequently rests on detailed speculative argumentation; since the days of Neo-Platonism it has arisen as a purely speculative system with numerous modifications even within the province of the spiritual life of Western Christendom. However, all these attempts at proof fail to hold good, since they are reached by means of a method which rests on a false estimate of our knowledge. That truth has been demonstrated in all its aspects in the preceding chapter. There is no support to be found in that method for the system in question, if it cannot be maintained by itself, by the convincing force of its *practical* principle. The question is simply whether such a one-sidedly religious idea of the chief good as that which is found at bottom here is the true and rational one. And that is just what must be flatly denied.

Perhaps, too, it may be affirmed that no one among us will be inclined to defend the system who has actually realised what that system when followed out *consistently* means. Those who declare for many of its fundamental ideas, since they follow an incorrect speculative method, really do so only because they fail to draw the conclusions for practical life required by the principle, because they seek to combine with that principle a rule of life which rests on quite a different basis and has arisen in quite a different connection. But if we ask what prevents us from recognising the idea of the chief good we refer to as the rational one, and what in like manner occasions those who represent it to show so fundamental a divergence from it, the

answer is not difficult. We cannot bring ourselves *to condemn the historical development of humanity as something that should not be.* But that is what this idea requires of us. I formerly explained the origin of the notion of sin, the rule according to which that notion is invariably formed. I then showed likewise—and the actual state of things exhibited in history allows of no doubt on the matter—that this abstractly religious idea of the chief good leads to our declaring finite life in the world *as such* to be sin.[1] All positive value is disallowed to it; it exists only to be condemned, denied, annihilated: from that consideration the practical rule of life is derived which we have in contemplation and asceticism. But I shall not stop here again to dispute modern softened forms of the idea, the drift of which is that finite existence is apprehended as the second factor in the necessary process exhibited by the Absolute, and which avoid in this way the condemnation of finite life as sin and as a reprehensible fall from divine life. For as against these what was put forward above holds good. Resting on a false method which was previously refuted, these forms of thought fall to be considered now only from the point of view of their *practical* principle and its full application: so regarded, however, they judge themselves, since they deny their own principle. The idea requires the condemnation of finite life, of historical

[1] *Das Wesen der christlichen Religion*, p. 170. Sin is always the transgression of the will of the Godhead. The idea of sin is always shaped, therefore, according to the knowledge of the Divine will which a person has or believes he has. If now in mystical piety the denial of the world and of everything worldly is required as a condition of that blessedness which springs from an intimate union with God, life in the world itself and all participation in it is condemned as sin.

existence as a whole, as sinful, objectionable, and irrational. We cannot bring ourselves to pronounce such a condemnation. We therefore reject the idea together with its consequences as opposed to reason.

But are we warranted in doing so? Is not reason rather on the side of those who deal seriously with that idea in every respect, a practice which has been followed again and again in history, and at the present day is still one of the elements at least which co-operate in large religious bodies outside Christianity? If we deny that, we rest our contention on the knowledge that human life and human reason *spring up only in history;* a denial of history is therefore equivalent to a denial of reason itself. Let it be well understood what is meant here. That view of the world which is here combated cannot of course avoid recognising the spiritual and rational life known in experience as something really existing, because that is the presupposition of every possible view of the world. Now, in pronouncing historical life to be a fall from true (divine) life, it affirms that while holding to such a denial, and in spite of it, it yet retains the kernel or essence of real spiritual life. But that is a manifest illusion. What is retained of spiritual life if one abstracts in thought from the historical existence of it, is nothing but its formal possibility. The spiritual life which there really is exists only in history. We must not restrict ourselves to the statement that it develops itself in history and has in it the theatre for its realisation. No; in its *essential nature* and as respects its whole content it is dependent on the action and reaction of men on each

other and on the world of sense. Even the capability of denying the world is conceivable only as the result of a historical development, and occurs too only in that form. What is assumed, from the standpoint of mystical ascetic contemplation hereby adopted, as the true life *before history*, is nothing but an empty imagination. In denying the view referred to we are obeying a requirement of reason, and do not merely yield to a temper which has been developed under special conditions in our sphere of civilisation, and which, although widely prevalent, might notwithstanding be opposed to reason.

Accordingly the rational idea of the chief good must undoubtedly be conceived in the sense of religion ; a *one-sided* religious conception of it is, however, erroneous. But not merely is this negative result derived from what has been said ; there follows no less a positive requirement to this effect : the chief good must be so conceived that it becomes intelligible as a product of historical development, and that the history of the human race in the world becomes intelligible as the *positive* means for its realisation. Now, this requirement is fulfilled only if the chief good is conceived as a *moral good*. That is the second answer to our question. We have now to go into it more particularly. But for this end it must first of all be shown that *moral development forms the kernel of history*.

As a subject of history, man is or becomes a subject of moral judgment and action. The ground on which moral ideals are formed is not the individual human

mind, but the action and reaction of men on each other in society.

There is, of course, every reason to maintain the peculiarity of moral phenomena, to insist on the immediately certain character and the directly convincing power of conscience, *i.e.* of the moral judgment and law within oneself. Those systems which deny this, which dissolve man's moral life somehow in the Utilitarian sense and trace it back to the factors of the natural life, are not in accordance with the reality presented in history, and are therefore false. But in order to overcome that opposition to the correct theory of the moral life which has its source in Utilitarianism, we must avoid a double error. Above all we must guard against the invention of a myth regarding the moral capacity of man such as can always be easily exposed, an invention due to the peculiarity and independence of the moral life, and designed to "explain" the actual fact here presented. Of course that is not a real explanation, but only an example of the false method of explanation which, instead of referring the unknown to the known, rather refers the known to the unknown. The inclination which is still widely prevalent at this day to satisfy in this way the need for a further elucidation of moral phenomena, the opinion that by this means we are simultaneously anchoring them safely on firm ground, is nothing but an after-effect of the Logos idea which has for so long a time governed men's thought. At least, that very idea leads us to explain everything that distinguishes man as an original endowment of the human mind. Be that, however, as it may, at all events this procedure neither serves for

the extension of our knowledge nor does it secure moral phenomena against a new Utilitarian interpretation. But just as little satisfaction can there be in stopping short simply at the fact that we are confronted here with phenomena which cannot be further resolved, and in refraining from every explanation obtained by looking at them in a wider connection. That rather seems to me to be the other mistake against which we have to be on our guard. In the first place, of course, nothing positive is accomplished in any direction by such declinature: by this means we shall not be in a position really to counteract the dazzling impression produced by the Utilitarian systems and their plausible explanations. But in particular the truth which the facts require us to affirm is after all completed even on this view, and that too as it were naturally, in a manner that conflicts with reality. He who stops short at an explanation of the moral phenomena which we comprise under the name of Conscience as ultimate elements which are not further to be resolved, must of necessity go on to reckon them as part of the original endowment of every human spirit. Then that leads further to the affirmation of a uniformity in them which as a matter of fact, from the evidence of historical experience, does not characterise them. I am well aware in how tempered a form all this may be put forward. Thus it is said, no doubt, by those who represent a standpoint of the kind, that only the outlines of moral phenomena are everywhere the same, whereas the more definite form in which they appear, the complexion which they assume, the preponderance of the one or the other element in the moral ideal of a

period—all that is derived from the historical environment. However, even in that there is more affirmed already than the facts warrant. As to this point, we must not go farther than the affirmation that in the moral ideals of all periods and nations *common tendencies* may be observed, but that the ideals themselves are always characterised as the product of definite historical factors. For now there must be room left not merely for the erring conscience of the individual, but also for serious aberrations of moral judgment observed in whole groups. There must be room left for that, because experience and history teach that there is something of the kind, though we may lament it ever so much.

If I am right, the position of matters is this. As against all Utilitarianism we must adhere without demur with the Moralists of the opposite school to the peculiarity of the elementary moral processes, to the belief that the derivation of them from the efforts of the natural Will is false. So too all myths telling of a fully formed moral capacity, a moral organ, or anything of that sort, must always be rejected as being no less sterile than they are dangerous. With respect to the *individual* man, the conclusion of the matter must simply be that the processes cannot be further derived and explained. But it is by no means necessary, therefore, to renounce that aim altogether. It is rather of service, if we would obtain a further elucidation of the matter, to cast one's glance at the outset at the action and reaction of men on each other in history and society, and to view such action and reaction as the native element of all moral life. In this way a

further explanation is discoverable, an explanation which, if it is really to be such, can never mean here anything but a derivation of moral processes from the more general and better known phenomenon of man's natural Will and endeavour. In this way we arrive at the possibility of refuting Utilitarianism by doing justice to the element of truth contained in it, while on the other hand its error is avoided; the peculiarity and independence of the fundamental moral phenomena remain untouched. For on the theory thus arrived at two conclusions are quite compatible with each other: the moral life arises necessarily in the endeavour of *humanity* to reach well-being and happiness, while the conscience of the *individual* is recognised as being relatively to his natural Will an entirely independent faculty.

In a former discussion on the relation of Religion and Morality I have already propounded this same thesis, and I attempted to show at the same time by what rule, or, if the expression is preferred, by what law, the moral ideals of humanity arise.[1] And I always returned from the examination of other attempts at explanation to this one as being that which the facts required. Men cannot live together and be developed by acting and reacting on each other without an esteem being engendered in them for other goods than those of the natural Will. Then from these goods simple and primitive moral ideals are detached, which are inculcated by education, and being inwardly accepted form the conscience of the individual. We call them *moral goods;* they are distinguished from all others by

[1] *Das Wesen der christlichen Religion*, p. 175 ff.

the fact that they are always goods for a majority, not merely for an individual, and by the fact that without a corresponding attention to duty they cannot be preserved as a whole and in the long run. Thus the great dependence of the concrete moral ideals on the historical circumstances which exist at any time ceases to be the stumbling-block which is avoided as much as possible; it seems now at length to be simply self-evident. There remains room for the divergences which actually occur, even for essential aberrations from the common tendency at particular points. And yet it seems to be a fact founded on the nature of the case that such a *common tendency* does not merely exist by accident, but must even be developed in all moral life. That must be the case just as surely as the essential features of human social life, great as the differences are in its more particular formation and character, reappear everywhere as the same. In other words, human society cannot exist without there being produced, without there appearing somehow, what we call moral law and moral development. And now, since the individual man again only exists as man and only becomes man in the community, the moral element or conscience is *an integrant factor of human life*, of human existence. That proposition holds good for this way of looking at the subject as surely as it can be affirmed by any theory of an inborn conscience. But it is enforced in such wise that conclusions opposed to reality do not follow from it. This mode of explanation therefore seems to me to be that which is required by the facts. Not as if the truth had to be ignored by it, that together with the principle described many

different influences again affect the further development. As the most important of these there have to be mentioned the multifarious influences exerted by religion, and the important effect produced by individual moral heroes. But I am of opinion that not only the primitive beginnings of the moral life have to be explained by means of the law we speak of, but that that law has also governed the further development of morality in a greater measure than all else has done.

At the present day many moralists are inclined, while likewise deriving the moral ideals from human development, to dwell principally on other elements in this process. The observation, viz., has forced itself on them that in course of time moral convictions and practices produce further a determinative effect on the mental and bodily organisation of the individual, so that in the shape of moral instincts, as it were, they can now be *transmitted* from the one generation to the other. One can occasionally read that that is described as a confirmation of the old doctrine of an inborn conscience, as a confirmation in the sense of a reduction of it to its true import. It is a kindred thought which is adopted by others, or by the same people, when they bring forward in particular *the mechanical element* implied in moral development. Exercise and custom are held to be of primary importance in order that natural efforts may be produced which meet the purposes of morality, in order that fixed associations of ideas, feelings, and actions may be formed, which, on occasion being given, determine conduct in the sense of what is morally good.

Now, it cannot be denied that there is here a correct

observation at bottom in each of the two cases. A transmission of moral instincts does take place, and so too exercise, custom, is an important factor in moral education. But if it is supposed that in making these observations we have seized the main point and found the real explanation of moral development, that is an illusion which is plainly recognisable, indeed scarcely conceivable. Those factors, deserving as they are of earnest consideration, are after all never anything but *secondary elements*, in which the real explanation itself must never be sought or can never be found. In order that it may be possible for moral instincts to be transmitted, there must first be such convictions and principles in existence. So too exercise and custom presuppose the recognition of moral ideals, first on the part of the educator, then at a later time on the part of the person himself who submits to them.

The crucial element therefore always lies elsewhere, viz. in the historical development itself in which moral life arises. What is *inborn* in the individual in respect to that life has therefore with no less certainty *the ground of its origin in history*, only not in his own history, but in that of his ancestors. So too what is acquired by practice as a natural basis for future moral action is derived first of all from history, in which alone the intention to resort to custom and practice can be formed. To this has to be added the fact that notwithstanding every denial there really is such a thing as *Freedom* in the case, and it does not merely determine in part the doing and suffering of man, but also exercises a considerable influence on the develop-

ment and preservation of *the conscience itself*. The denial of freedom carries with it, no doubt, the show of scientific procedure, because homage is thus paid to that intellectual impulse of the human mind which aspires to unity; in truth, that denial means doing violence to the object of investigation, and that signifies that it is an example of the grossest *scientific* offence there is. It would therefore have to be described as a serious aberration threatening moral science if the upper hand should be gained by the disposition to seek the explanation of moral phenomena in these psycho-physical associations, which can always be only approximately grasped and in the end are untransparent, instead of seeking it in the clear and palpable motives and really well-known factors of the historical development of our race. But if the latter course is adopted, what we find is that the law mentioned above, which rests on the essential connection of moral ideals and goods, is the real fundamental law of moral development.

Now, in all this exposition which has just been given of the origin and development of man's moral life, of course only the one side of our theme has been discussed in the first instance, and the side too which forms the presupposition rather than the proper object of proof. The theme, as I remind the reader, is that moral development forms the core of all history, and that the chief good must therefore be conceived as a moral good, if it is to appear, according to the requirement of reason, as a product of history. But hitherto it has been shown only that moral development is entirely and absolutely bound up with history, has in

it the seat of its origin and its growth. The possibility is not thereby excluded that *something else* might after all be the principal feature of history, while only a subordinate significance fell to the moral element. It remains for us, therefore, to discuss the theme on the other side, that which is the more important for the problem here proposed, and to show that conversely also the centre of gravity of history lies in moral development. The particular objection that in a former connection the endeavour to obtain perfect satisfaction for all the needs of life was rather described as the real essence of history has already been met by the preceding discussion. We have seen that moral development too fits in to this general character of history. For the origin of other higher goods than those of a natural kind forms the critical factor of moral life. The endeavour spoken of is not stopped or thwarted by this issue, but raised to a higher level, filled with ideal content. It must now be shown that it is this that forms the core of history.

But for this purpose there is needed first of all a more exact definition of the nature of moral phenomena themselves, of the nature, viz., of their *content*. Hitherto we have only considered their *formal* character, in virtue of which they stand out as against the natural feelings, judgments, and maxims as something peculiar; their *material* side, the content and object of moral judgment and of moral prescriptions, was on the other hand left hitherto out of consideration. On this subject what has been said is simply that there is found to be a great multiplicity in history, but that in all moral ideals *common tendencies* can nevertheless be observed.

If we now inquire more minutely as to this matter, we see that we must depend on these inalienable common tendencies if we would secure an objective basis for our judgment. Now, they may be described by saying that it is above all *the subordination of one's own well-being to the well-being of others or, say, of the community* that everywhere evokes moral approbation, and that besides, *yielding, at least in some ways, to the sensuous impulse of the moment is everywhere censured.* Our statement must take this general form if it is not to contain any exaggeration. We must not say that *all* subordination of one's own well-being to that of others or that of a community is approved, and that the opposite of that is disapproved, not to speak of the former being required and the latter being forbidden, but we do say that everywhere in the case of praise and blame, in the case of an injunction and prohibition of conscience, so far as these are pronounced as a matter of fact, we have in view such devotion to mankind as a whole, or at all events to others. As little can it be affirmed that the active life of sense as a whole is the object of moral judgment and regulation, but it can certainly be declared that there is no general moral condition in which an attitude of indifference is assumed towards man's surrender to the sensuous impulse of the moment whatever form it takes. Conscience, therefore, is everywhere concerned with the social and with the sensuous relations of human nature and human life. And there can be no wonder too at that. For side by side with the religious relation, that which points above the world, these are the two worldly relations, so to say, in which human life runs its course,

and which with the former make up the content of it.

Now, if this is true, the moral ideal has reference everywhere to the government of the relations between man and man in society in the sense just indicated, and further, to our inward mastery over the sensuous impulses of the moment. And here the differences may be very great. The gulf is enormous between the Christian ideal of love to mankind universally and the morality of a wild tribe which knows only limited duties resting on one member of the tribe with respect to the other, whereas the stranger has no other rights than the beast of the field. No less great is the gulf between a thorough-going discipline of the life of sense and a morality which requires, let us say, steadfastness under the pains inflicted by one's enemies, but which also looks upon the most immoderate sensual indulgence as something of no consequence. And yet we must not mistake the common tendency which connects the two extremes together. We must do so all the less that in all cases the farther the development advances it takes form the more definitely in the direction of these common tendencies. The differences pass into the background, the common and similar element always comes more to the front. From the most different points of departure there is really in every case a movement in the same line to the same end. If, therefore, we speak of a moral development of the human race, and affirm that in it we have to do with the two points just mentioned, that is not merely the expression of a subjective conviction, but an objective truth as well, a truth which rests on a broad basis

of facts. What specially concerns us in the matter is that *this and nothing else* is the *moral* element of human life, that even in the most fully-developed historical conditions we are never concerned from the moral point of view with anything but the two relations discussed above. But the reason why this thesis is a momentous one in our estimation will be most clearly seen if we mention at this point the *opposite* idea which we contemplate in defending it.

That opposite idea is a conception of the function of morality which holds the *government of nature by reason or spirit* to be the essential characteristic of that function, and sees in the advance of that government even a direct *moral* advance. Here there are essentially three points that fall to be considered: the knowledge which culminates in science; the direct subjection of nature to the purposes of men by all sorts of discoveries and inventions; finally, the æsthetic element of our life, which finds its highest expression in the creations of art. For my part, I should like to gather up this threefold topic under the name of *Culture*, and to say that in the definition of the function of morality just attempted in opposition to ours, there is a view formed of that function which places the centre of gravity of it in culture and its advances. Now, here naturally it is not meant to be denied that in its bearing on moral life great importance attaches to culture — the word being always understood in the sense just explained. *But culture is in itself a product of the natural will and not of moral effort.* And the importance of it as bearing on moral life is partly indirect, partly of a pedagogic

nature. On the other hand, it nowhere guarantees by itself the moral soundness of a people, and history teaches that the one-sided advance of culture may be fraught with great moral danger. To develop these propositions further and to prove them is necessary owing to the importance of the subject. It is all the more requisite that, besides a conception which declares moral development (in the sense just set forth) to be the core of history, there is really only *one* more conception possible, that, viz., which claims that significance for culture and its advances. Thus, too, the question is of the greatest importance precisely as touching our main and proper theme. Let us, however, leave this matter alone for a while, the question, viz., what constitutes the core of history, and keep our discussion within the limit observed when we are concerned with the definition of moral life.

Now, the circumstance that the *intellectual factor* of mental life has a constitutive significance for moral life we have repeatedly noticed already: without the formal capacity in the mind there would be as little opportunity for moral judgment and action as for anything else that distinguishes man above the rest of the living creatures. But man's knowledge of the world, of nature as well as of human things, also exerts a determinative influence on his moral life. Without possessing such knowledge in some degree man cannot be a moral personality at all. Where moral development stands at a higher level in the general condition of a people, there is also knowledge to be found which is developed beyond its primitive beginnings. Some mastery over things, such as can

be attained only by means of the intellect, is even a condition of mental and personal life, and therefore, too, of all morality. And in that community in which the highest moral ideal is to be accepted, intellectual development must also have reached a certain stage in the upward direction. But even where this indispensable stage is passed, the height which intellectual life attains does not come to be a matter of indifference for moral life, but affects the more particular form which the moral ideal receives and the mode of its realisation. For it depends on it how far men have advanced at a given time in the mastery they have won by natural means over the world—that other important element of culture; and on that, again, the articulation of society at the time concerned is principally dependent. It can and must, therefore, in no wise be disputed that the development of intellectual life is of the greatest importance for that of moral life. What we deny is that the one thing coincides with the other: intellectual progress is not in itself moral, has not moral value directly and when taken by itself; we must not speak of an ethical value of science, as if science itself in virtue of its own nature possessed such value. The influence of intellectual development is indirect, and is restricted—supposing the amount of knowledge exists which is indispensable for the possibility of the highest moral ideal—to the production of an alteration on the material in which the ideal has to be realised; the ethical value of science is accordingly derivative. In moral life itself we are always immediately concerned with social life and with

the discipline which the mind administers to the life of sense.

On the other hand, there is a virtue which has to be manifested precisely in the life of the intellect, *the virtue of truthfulness*. That this virtue should be practised is a requirement which affects the whole of man's life, and one which must be made of those who are concerned in any degree with the sphere of the intellect proper. Naturally, however, as their occupation with it extends, the importance of the virtue mounts up; and the temptation to offend against it, as well as the opportunity of practising it in a perfect degree and of adding by means of it a prominent trait to one's moral character, increases with the development of intellectual life, whether we look at an individual or a community. Certainly it would prove a failure if we undertook to deduce the value of this virtue from the value of it for the general well-being. One who did so would run the risk of restricting the requirement and admitting exceptions for those cases in which truthfulness breeds demonstrable loss without entailing any advantage. Here the *independence of the moral point of view*, of which mention has repeatedly been made, falls to be considered. The binding power of this virtue must be asserted as immediately operative; the requirement that it should be manifested must be enforced as one which is unconditional. Still, the *theoretical* question why truthfulness is a virtue at all and falsehood a vice is not hereby precluded. But if it is raised, it just follows once more that it is a definite idea of social life and of its perfection on which *in the last resort*

the judgment is based. For there is truthfulness in its original sense only in the intercourse of men with each other. Thus we observe once more that we are referred to social life as the sphere of morality proper. There are peculiarly intellectual virtues, not because intellectual life has moral value in itself, but because as being human it takes form in the action and reaction of men in society, and therefore the moral point of view comes to be of significance for it.

After this it will require no lengthened discussion to prove that with regard to *man's dominion over the world*, the subjection of the world to human purposes, the position is similar to that of the life of the intellect in the narrower sense. That is the case simply for the reason that the two questions are most closely connected with each other, because the extension of knowledge, as has already been mentioned, is a condition of the progress of man's natural dominion over the world, and a higher measure of this last must be gained before knowledge as such can come to be independently cultivated. Here too, therefore, we shall have to acknowledge that the development of the extent and degree of this dominion over the world is of great importance for moral life, because it is true both that some success in that regard is a condition of mental and personal life, and that the increase of that success produces a far-reaching effect on the form which is impressed on social life or on the sphere of morality proper. Only, here as before, that significance is indirect. Progress in this sphere is by no means immediate progress in the moral sense; it may often, indeed, be associated with great moral

dangers; the high capability which one acquires or manifests in this sphere of action can just as little as scientific expertness be taken *in itself* for moral virtue. But then, of course, this also is a sphere in which virtues are developed and moral requirements originate which would otherwise not exist, or at all events would not exist in the same form. Industry and fidelity in the prosecution of the calling which in this sphere devolves originally upon all and permanently on a large fraction of men, accuracy and care in one's work let it be what it may, the strictest honesty in trade and traffic—all that and whatever is akin to it belongs to the moral life properly so called. These too are virtues which have an *independent* moral value, a value which must not be estimated by their importance for the well-being of individuals or of the community. So also it is true of them that every person finds occasion to some extent to manifest them, while it depends on the extent to which one is concerned in this sphere of human life how strong the temptations are which one has to overcome, and therefore, also, whether it is these virtues or faults as the case may be that predominate in one's general moral character. But finally, here as before, this mode of activity is not in itself and by virtue of its own nature a part of the moral process. It comes to be a part only from the fact that it is an element in human *society*, which is developed on earth under the conditions of the life of sense.

Both topics may be gathered up in the following brief statements. Man's knowledge of the world and the supremacy gained by the human race over the earth,

which are developed by acting and reacting on each other, are the result of the natural will to live, not of the moral endeavour to reach a perfect life. But, owing to the fact that like everything natural they help to form the basis of the moral process and belong with other elements to the material in which the moral ideal has to be realised, they also become an object of moral judgment themselves. So also they have indirectly on that account a great significance for moral life, and a high value for the progress of its development. On the other hand, the proper object of moral judgment and legislation is social life and the discipline of sensuous activity which is administered by the mind within. The characteristic which seems at first sight to show an *independent* moral value in the other spheres referred to, really proves on closer examination to be one which is bound up with the action and reaction of men in society, and does not lie in the direction of scientific or technical capacity, but of the inner discipline referred to.

The case is somewhat different with regard to the *æsthetic element* of our life. I do not understand by that merely men's concern with art in the narrower sense of the word. Such concern is limited both as respects enjoyment and practice to comparatively small circles, and like science in the sphere of knowledge can only be accounted the topmost level of a general element of life in which all more or less have part. And what interests us here is the relation of this general element to our moral life.

Now on this subject the following is what we have to say. In the first place, there is an intrinsic affinity

between the æsthetic and the moral judgment, which has been observed from the first in Ethics and has frequently been insisted on. Not only did the Greeks consistently with their type of mind bring the καλόν and the ἀγαθόν into very close proximity to each other, but something similar finds expression in common speech even among us, when we speak of the beauty of virtue and the ugliness of vice. However, that is not the chief point when we are considering the question of the moral significance of this factor. What is expressed at bottom in these utterances is only the spontaneous impression that we have to do with psychical processes which are similar to each other and which are differentiated from natural feelings and aspirations. The proper value of the æsthetic element for moral life, which must be rated *very high*, lies in its *educative significance*. That truth is realised particularly in the sphere of sensuous activity. But while that is so, the two things still remain different. Refinement of manners and a pleasing presentation of whatever appears to sense are, and always will be, something distinct from moral loveliness and moral discipline. Nevertheless, the closer relation to moral life involves the result that we cannot well speak of a virtue connected with the æsthetic sphere, as an intellectual virtue was alluded to above. Rather, on the one hand, do æsthetic injunctions pass over entirely into such as are moral, and on the other hand, in the æsthetic sphere as in that of natural and sensuous activity, moral injunctions are enforced as *restrictive*. As respects art in particular the latter fact has great significance, a significance which is often not suffici-

ently recognised. Summing up, therefore, we have to say that here we have to do with something that is of extraordinary importance even from the moral point of view—only that fact can be quite easily explained from what we have recognised above as the proper nature of moral development. There is nothing different and nothing new implied in that fact, nothing which is foreign to the proper nature of moral development and would yet have to be accounted an essential element of moral life.

What I have stated in these brief sentences on a matter so important may be very imperfect. But it suffices, first, to characterise the contrast between the different conceptions which is met with here, and, on the other hand, to show that that conception which we hold to be the correct one, however distinctly it is marked off from the other, can yet do full justice to the importance of culture for moral life. The proof of its truth I discern not so much in what could now be said on the subject as in the *testimony of the conscience of all times and nations.* We can, as it seems to me, expect at once from every one a recognition of the fact that intellectual endowment, expertness in technical work, and refinement of manners are something different from virtue and moral excellence of character. Strictly speaking, it is only isolated moralists who have denied that. The simple practical judgment decides absolutely in the other sense. But if an appeal is made against this assertion to the circumstance that the same moralists have employed the notion of Morality and Ethics for the most part in another and wider sense than that adopted here, and that if this sense of the

words which is accepted by them is presupposed, their doctrine really proves to be correct, I cannot take such a defence seriously. The circumstance referred to is of course correct, but it is connected in the case of the thinkers in question with an erroneous conception of science, a conception according to which it is rather an art of treating notions than an endeavour after a knowledge of reality; and it shows besides that material errors are readily incurred if terminology is arbitrarily dealt with—apart altogether from the fact that by this means the usage of language is reduced to confusion, and so the common understanding which it is intended to subserve is obstructed.

As, therefore, what we call moral life is developed in the historical life of humanity, so conversely social life is, properly speaking, the moral sphere. That is further shown by the fact that even the other side of the function of morality, the discipline of the life of sense, which of course must be mentioned from the first as another leading element of that function, comes to be developed and formed on its part only in the action and reaction between people in society. With this accentuation of the social element, the reservation of course is always made that in the moral sense it is essentially and principally the formation of the personal life and character of individuals that is of importance. That is something that can never be seriously called in question. It is individuals who are the subjects of moral life, never a universal Reason or anything of that kind. Ethics must therefore always be *personal Ethics*. But this life of personal morality has its native soil in the action and reaction between

people in society, and cannot be separated from that interaction even in thought. And at a given time there will be a correspondence between the moral condition of the community and the moral excellence of individuals. The fact that exceptions are possible, and that conspicuously excellent moral characters are met with even where the social conditions on the whole are morally corrupt, only accords with the general nature of historical things, in virtue of which exceptions to the rule are always to be observed in these. In the main, however, the rule holds that the two things correspond. If the life of the community is morally sound it engenders morally excellent characters; and again, it is the moral excellence of the individuals on which the soundness of social life rests.

But now our thesis (to which we return at this point) is that *this* moral life and its development forms the core of history. The thesis in itself will scarcely perhaps be contested. He who denies it, and instead of that life puts the progress of culture in the forefront, will do so while explaining that he has at the same time a different notion of morality. What we have to say, therefore, on our part in reply to such a denial has essentially been stated already in the study we have just been engaged in. And it has been stated, too, in both its aspects, negatively as well as positively. Negatively, in so far as it was shown that culture does not possess moral value immediately and in itself. Positively, in so far as it was demonstrated that the significance of culture for moral life, and so too for historical development, meets on our view with full recognition and ample appreciation.

There are two things which still remain to be said, and which doubtless settle the question conclusively. The first has already been mentioned in passing. It is that the advance of culture, essential as it is on the one hand for moral development, involves nevertheless on the other hand *considerable dangers* for that development. On the contrary, no one will be able to maintain that anything similar holds with regard to those advances which we characterised as moral in the strict sense—advances in the devotion of the individual to the community, and in the discipline which is administered to the life of sense. The mere question whether that is possible will be felt instinctively by every one to be a contradiction. Or how can it be seriously asked whether there is in moral progress a latent danger for moral development? And now the other point is connected in the closest manner with this one. Only the moral soundness of a people, the word "moral" being understood in the sense explained above, guarantees in the long run its historical existence and power; on the other hand, its decay points to a decline of the people in question which nothing else can check, and which ends in their ruin or in their total loss of historical significance. The complete destruction of this, its moral soundness, no people can as a whole survive. A brilliant development and increase of culture, on the contrary, has often occurred during a period in which in closest connection therewith the historical decay of the people had its commencement. Consequently it may be affirmed with good right *that moral life and its development in the sense here maintained forms the core of history.*

Or should the fact that this moral development, whether we consider humanity as a whole or the individual nation, is often interrupted in its progress, that periods of aspiration are followed as a rule by periods of downfall, form a ground of appeal against our affirmation? That would be the case only if there were no *freedom* in human action. But there is such freedom. And we have the additional fact that men have not used it as they should and in the way that would be conformable to reason, in the sense of what is good, but predominantly in the sense of what is evil, that history as a whole and in detail testifies not merely to man's natural imperfection, but to his willing what is evil. This affirmation is not a conception or estimate of the moral condition of humanity which is drawn from the Christian faith, but a truth which is attested by the conscience of all times and nations. At least, the original significance of the words *συνείδησις* and *conscientia* is entirely the evil, *i.e.* the accusing and condemning, conscience. Now, if this is taken into consideration, no counter argument can be found in the character of moral development which is referred to, against the assertion that that development forms the core of human history. The empirical course of moral development does not answer to the demands of reason. It fails to do so owing to that freedom which is, we must admit, an indispensable condition of all moral life. But that does not prevent reason from leading us to recognise in that development, in spite of its defectiveness, the core of historical life.

If, therefore, it is an imperative requirement of

reason that we should conceive the chief good as a product of history, and the latter as the positive means for its realisation, that means simply that the chief good must be conceived as *moral*. On the other hand, as was previously shown, it must be further defined in the sense of religion as participation in the supramundane Divine life. *That rational idea of the chief good which we are in search of is consequently the idea which combines the religious and the moral points of view in the closest manner with each other.* Now, such an idea we have in the Christian idea of the supramundane Kingdom of God, which has the kingdom of moral righteousness on earth as its intramundane correlative. Our discussion up to this point may therefore be counted the *first step* on our way to the proof of the reasonableness of this idea, and consequently of the Christian faith. It is not yet the whole proof. It must now be shown, further, that it is precisely this idea, and it alone, which answers, not merely as respects its general character as now stated, but in the quite definite, concrete form it assumes, to the requirements of reason.

As our point of departure for this further proof, we must take the position which the ideal of Christian Ethics assumes in history, the fact, viz., that that ideal is the highest that history knows, the one in which the tendency common to all moral ideals reaches its completion.

It is, as we saw, the *social* life of men to which these ideals principally refer. And further, what is required is the subordination in some degree and in some manner of one's own well-being to the well-being

of others or of a community. But in directing our view to the subject as a whole, we must not rest satisfied with this indefinite description, indefinite, viz., in so far as it does not state in what the well-being, whether of the individual or of a majority or of the community, as the case may be, must be sought. There can and must be a more precise definition to the effect that we contemplate a *preference of the moral goods which are possessed by men in common above those of the individual.* It is true the principle, even in its first-mentioned simple form, preserves its general and thorough-going significance. What we acknowledge as moral duty is not unfrequently a postponement, intelligible at once in concrete circumstances, of one's own well-being in favour of that of another or of others. Only the principle does not suffice in this form to express with that definiteness which is possible and necessary the tendency of all moral ideals. That is rather the case only if the point of view of the moral good which is common to several (many or all) is also introduced. For only in that way does it become clear that through moral development human life gains a new and higher *content.* It is equally clear from this further definition that through obedience to the moral law the personal agent not merely promotes the well-being of others, but in and with that his own well-being at the same time, only not simply his well-being in his sensuous and individual capacity, but his well-being as a moral person, as a sharer in the historical and moral life of a community. And now this tendency of all moral legislation reaches its completion in the Christian ideal

of a universal kingdom of moral righteousness on earth. That truth may be shown in all the aspects of it that can fall to be considered.

For, in the first place, the *extension* of the circle within which the requirement is enforced is of the greatest significance. Even among highly developed peoples, to whom no one would presume to assign a low stage in the development, we find this circle still restricted to their own nation and those confederate with it; the stranger remains destitute of rights, so far as religion does not intervene with softening and civilising effect. Completeness is reached if this and every restriction falls away, and *man* as such is accounted the person in respect to whom the requirement of morality has to be fulfilled. But that is the standpoint denoted by the ideal of Christian Ethics which characterises the Kingdom of God, since it unites all men together in a community in which they have mutual rights and duties. Now a further extension of the circle is impossible; the *terminal point* is thus unconditionally arrived at.

But what holds good when we look to the extension of the requirement holds good when we look next to its *intensive character*. The original and for ever inviolable basis of the moral law in social life is the requirement of *righteousness*, the requirement that in the largest sense of the expression we should take nothing from any one, but let every one have his own. If nothing but this is required, if righteousness itself again is only understood and practised quite in the rough sense, we have a very imperfect condition of moral discipline. As contrasted with that, there is

even considerable progress if an extended application of this law is reached, the acquisition of a delicate tact in estimating the rights of others. But the requirement of righteousness is surpassed by the Christian law of *love to mankind* universally, a law to the effect that we must not merely let every one have his own, but must help and promote the good of every person who comes within the horizon of our concrete moral sphere as one in need of help, or who is put by God in our way. Not as if this new law of love, which binds not merely brother to brother or friend to friend, but all men to one another, signified a destruction of the moral links and societies already existing, so that something new might now come in their place. That holds good, say, with regard to the ideal Republic of Plato; *i.e.* the presumably higher principle offered by it assumes, at least in part, a hostile attitude towards the narrower forms of moral fellowship. But it does not apply to the kingdom of God. The law of love which rules in the kingdom of God is meant to permeate and renew the whole life and action of man, is meant not to destroy, but to fulfil and complete. The judgment may therefore be pronounced that in this aspect too the moral life of men reaches its consummation in their aspiration to the righteousness of the kingdom of God. A union of all men with one another which surpasses that presented to us as the goal in the kingdom of God is not conceivable. For the highest thing that can unite men with one another is the sentiment of love in its manifold expressions.

But what principally distinguishes the moral ideal of

the kingdom of God is the circumstance that the *guiding thought of the well-being* of others, or of the common well-being of all, *does not remain an abstract thought and one which is empty of content.* This ideal rather includes a gradation of good things, from the lowest, which serve for the preservation of the life of sense and for the alleviation of its pains, on through those of a moral nature in the earthly life to that which is highest—eternal life both in time and in the future perfected kingdom. In particular there is no doubt left as to the fact that we have to do with the well-being, not of the natural individual, but of the *moral personality*, that the life has to gain a different content from what it has by nature, that every manifestation of love must aim at elevating those to whom it applies to the stage of personal moral life, at keeping them there and leading them in that direction to perfection. *But that fact is of telling significance.* In that way such an ideal first of all gains definite support and a precise meaning. Only in this way is it guaranteed that the sentiment and manifestation of goodwill to men are not aimlessly projected into vacancy, and instead of securing the well-being of men in the full and ideal sense, do not actually create harm. Not as if it were meant to be affirmed that a result of that sort never occurs empirically among those who aspire to the righteousness of the kingdom of God. Everything empirical is always defective, and nothing, not even what is best, is perfectly safeguarded from error. What I mean is that *the ideal itself* presents no deficiency here, and does not leave the person who submits to it with earnest obedience in

doubt as to the aims which the love to man required by that ideal has to set up for itself. In this exceedingly important aspect also it is conclusive and consummate, inasmuch as it includes everything, yet not in chaotic fashion, but in a definite order and traced up to a supreme goal.

In regard, further, to the relation of man to the world of sense, the legislation of the kingdom of God requires strict discipline to be exercised by the spirit, a species of discipline to which all the active life of sense must be subjected. On the other hand, it assumes an attitude of indifference towards all those matters which we included above under the name of culture. True, it is said in the Old Testament that man, as being made in the image of God, is called to exercise dominion over the earth. And what is meant there is that *natural dominion of the mind over the world* which is progressively realised as culture is built up and developed. But all that forms no element of the *moral* legislation of the kingdom of God. In it culture is neither forbidden nor required, but as man's natural dominion over the world rests on a creative decree, it is simply presupposed as a datum. And if our fuller exposition of the question of principle given above is at all correct, that is not a defect—as Strauss, *e.g.*, has supposed—but the only correct attitude which any moral legislation can assume relatively to all these things. Rightly considered it must be the case, as we find in the legislation of the kingdom of God, that from the *moral* point of view, what is taken into consideration in reference to the activity of sense is not the aspect of it which relates to the *object*, but the

inner mental discipline which the *subject* ought to exercise over his action.

It is equally true that in this sphere the ideal of the kingdom of God forms a marked contrast to every extravagance such as characterises the unqualified discipline of the life of sense, as well as to the ascetic renunciation of that life. It holds the position, if that expression is preferred, of the correct mean between the erroneous extremes, only it is not interposed simply for the sake of mediation, but on the ground of the entirely independent principle contained in it. For inasmuch as it announces as the supreme purpose of human life one which is supramundane, and therefore supersensuous, it has a principle there which alone leads to a thorough moral discipline of the life of sense. Owing to that principle it also takes up asceticism in connection with itself *as a pedagogic aid.* But on the other hand, inasmuch as it lays down a close *positive* connection between the supramundane purpose and the moral life in the world, it denies asceticism as amounting in itself to the moral purpose, and ascribes a positive value even to the life of sense in the world, yet only as means subordinated in the most distinct manner to the spiritual purposes comprehended in the kingdom of God. Thus, on this side too it makes good its character as gathering up and completing the moral tendencies which are exhibited in history.

But if we ask what this comprehensive and conclusive significance of the ideal of Christian Ethics is rooted in, we observe that we are referred to the *religious* thought which governs it. The kingdom of God is not merely a moral ideal in the world, but

above all a chief good which is supramundane, and in the possession and enjoyment of which man's blessedness consists. It is in virtue of that fact, and that alone, that this ideal gains the power of gathering up and bringing to the goal of perfection whatever moral tendencies are to be observed in history.

We previously found, and again we carefully emphasised the point above, that there is an essential connection between moral ideals and the good things which correspond to them. This connection must be described as amounting absolutely to *a fundamental law of moral development.* The realisation of a moral ideal depends principally on the fact that a corresponding good exists; even its origin is often, and its permanent naturalisation among men is certainly always, conditioned by that fact. But now the consummate and conclusive ideal of the kingdom of God has *no good in this world* corresponding to it. Only in connection with the announcement of the chief good and of the blessedness offered in it has that ideal therefore been able to gain a firm hold in history and in the thoughts of men. No doubt the mingling of nations in the imperial world of Rome about the time of the origin of Christianity led to the result that the moral reflection of the later Stoa ran on similar lines of thought. That very circumstance, however, serves to confirm our assertion. The ideal became operative only in the Christian Church. For the question is not whether it possessed validity for some isolated thinkers, but whether overmastering impulses proceeded from it affecting *the moral life of the community.* Now that result came about only through the Christian announce-

ment of eternal life in the kingdom of God. And though we must not fail to acknowledge that many representatives of the later Stoa endeavoured by earnest devotion to the cause of humanity to yield practical obedience to the ideal recognised by them, yet it is no less certain that others rested satisfied with rhetorical declamations on that cause. But apart altogether from all such minutiæ, it really admits of no doubt that the Church first introduced into the history of humanity the ideal of a kingdom of moral righteousness embracing all men. There is no completion, therefore, of the moral life of humanity and of its ideals without an *essential* combination of that life with religion, and that, too, not in any sense whatever, but precisely in the very definite sense of the idea of the kingdom of God, *i.e.* in the sense of the *Christian* faith.

The essential necessity of this connection will appear, however, still more distinctly, if we do not merely deduce it from the general rule and prove it from history, but take a closer view of it in its concrete peculiarity. A union of *all* men by means of the law of *love* presupposes that there is something in which all have part in the same manner, and that that is not something of a subordinate nature, but the highest relation of man's existence and life. There is nothing of the kind, however, in the world; but what we perceive here rather gives the clearest evidence of the manifold and marked differences which separate men from one another. Either, therefore, there is a *chief good common to the race*, a common *eternal calling* transcending all natural distinctions, as Divine Revela-

tion teaches and as the Christian believes, or the moral ideals of Christianity comprised under the title of philanthropy must be described as exaggerated, fanatical, and irrational conceptions. For such they are as soon as they are disengaged from the connection with religion in which Christianity proclaims them. In that case they require to be moderated and lowered, in order to be adjusted in the last resort to the good things of the moral order which are found *in this world*. There can no longer be any thought of a common supreme duty relating to *all* men, since in that case there is nothing that unites all men with one another. A *gradation* of duties according to the distance there is in each instance between us and others is in that case the rational theory, not a gradation of a kind which is transcended and permeated again by a supreme requirement embracing all men, but which is itself the highest requirement there is. True, it is not thereby said that there are not even in that case certain negative duties remaining, which we have to fulfil towards all men. We confess our acceptance of such duties, in fact, as respects our conduct towards all living creatures, though they have no share in what distinguishes man. But the duty of love which has to be fulfilled towards all is precluded, and so is the establishment of that duty on the ground of the equality of all men before God, on the common goal for all in the eternal kingdom of God; and consequently the unconditional recognition of that equality itself is precluded. In short, what constitutes *the true nature of philanthropy* it is in that case impossible in the long run to maintain. And if the matter is rightly understood,

not merely does the prospect of the realisation of this ideal disappear, but the ideal itself must in the case supposed be rejected as exaggerated and irrational. No delusive phrase about the dignity of man and so forth will henceforth be able to get us over that fact, as soon as the contemplation of man's actual moral life in history shall have completely banished from ethics the old architecture of philosophical thought. For with the Christian religion there is denied what forms the indispensable basis for those ideas of man's dignity and of respect for a person as such, the means by which those ideas themselves were first developed, and through which they gained firm ground in history. But if the step is taken which reason requires as soon as Christianity is denied, if the ideal of philanthropy is lowered and moderated, the moral development in history wants in that case the completing terminal point to which, nevertheless, it aspires. Although it has reached such a consummation in the historical phenomenon of Christianity, not merely in theory, but also in practice, it is sentenced, arbitrarily and contrary to reason, to the doom of remaining a torso. That is therefore a view which condemns itself.

But while it is the case accordingly that the moral requirement of Christianity with respect to social life, by which, after all, we are all aware in our hearts that we are bound, can only be upheld and carried out in connection with the Christian *religion*, above all is it true that the application of moral discipline to the life *of sense* which Christianity requires is inseparable from the *religious* idea at the bottom of that faith. Indeed, that fact is so evident that it does not really require to

be proved. Everywhere it can be observed. He who fails to recognise the religious idea in its significance for moral life, or at all events repels it, is naturally led to allow wide scope in this sphere to man's subjective inclination, even when from the language used we may observe that that is done only hesitatingly and reluctantly, that the person concerned is himself by no means minded to give effect to that inclination. The essential connection between a consistent and energetic application of moral discipline to the activities of sense on the one hand and religion on the other, it is absolutely impossible to deny.

Now, from all this we infer *that the Christian idea of the Kingdom of God is the rational idea of the chief good.* It is so not merely for the general reason that it combines the religious and the moral conceptions with one another, but also, above all, owing to the *mode* in which it unites the two. To state the matter briefly, the Christian religion, which has its centre in this idea, brings the moral development of humanity to its consummation by satisfying its religious craving. The one thing does not take place apart from the other, but through the occurrence of the one the other also occurs. Without the supramundane good of religion there would be no consummation of man's moral development, and without the kingdom of moral righteousness the religion which points to the supramundane good would have no positive living content by which it could get firm footing in the world. A more intimate union of the two factors which determine the rational idea of the chief good is not conceivable. Just as little is a development conceivable

which takes us beyond what is hereby attained. We have rather found that through this combination with religion, moral development reaches a consummation beyond which there is nothing further; and, on the other hand, every attempt to emancipate religion from this combination with moral life, and so to bring it to a professedly higher perfection, issues in a renunciation of the world and of history which conflicts with reason (p. 337). Consequently the Christian idea of the kingdom of God is the rational idea of the chief good, and the Christian faith is the "Highest Knowledge" answering to reason, that knowledge of the First Cause and the Final Purpose of the world which we are in search of.

Now, this judgment as to the chief good, and therefore as to the highest knowledge, is an *objective* judgment. It is not founded on the subjective needs and the subjective appreciation of the individual human soul, but on what is *characteristic of mankind generally;* it rests on a comprehensive estimate of the historical life of men; in pronouncing it we place ourselves at the standpoint of the reason in the history of humanity: in this sense it is an objective judgment. Nevertheless, the recognition of it signifies something else than the recognition of a fact of sense or a mathematical proposition. No one can recognise such a judgment without mentally subjecting himself to it. Therefore, too, the form in which the requirement of such recognition is addressed to the individual is totally different from the form which the requirement takes in the other cases. We have no constraint imposed by the understanding, but a *duty* which

applies to the whole man, and principally to the Will and Feeling. In this highest knowledge one cannot have part without *living* by it; and one cannot live by it without standing permanently in the relation of personal dutiful obedience towards this truth. But if such is the nature of the highest knowledge attainable among men, it is also quite intelligible how no one can be compelled by the means employed by the Understanding to have or to seek a highest species of knowledge at all. What we have here is not a theory compelling all to recognise it, but a duty common to all.

But now what has been proved hitherto is limited when strictly considered to the proposition that the Christian *idea* of the kingdom of God is the rational and absolute *idea* of the chief good. As to the *reality*, as to the existence, of such a kingdom of God, nothing has been decided by that as yet. That kingdom can, as the chief good, by no means be identified with the universal moral society which is being developed in the world, and in which all men are united by the law of love. As the chief good—and only as such is it that principle of the highest knowledge which reason requires (p. 222)—it is supramundane and invisible, the kingdom of perfection belonging to the future heavenly world.[1] Although, therefore, the ideal of

[1] This expression may be found fault with, in so far as conformably to the sensuous mode of representation it places over against the actual world another, although a heavenly and future, *world*. But I could think of no better expression for the fact than that which is presented in the text. For obviously what requires to be said is that we have to do with a different aggregate of real conditions of existence from that of present experience. But for any such aggregate we have only the name world. And there is

the moral kingdom of God is undoubtedly given as a historical fact in the world, and it is no less true that there are attempts at an approximate realisation of it at least, yet as to the *reality* of this *eternal* kingdom of God nothing is thereby decided as yet. And if, further, the Christian Church lives in faith as to that kingdom, that too yields no decision. Judged from a purely objective basis it might be an illusion, just as other religious ideas of an influential nature which have emerged in history and again disappeared we undoubtedly acknowledge to be erroneous and cast aside. If now the conclusion of the matter nevertheless is that this Christian idea of the kingdom of God is the rational idea of the chief good, we shall most correctly describe what has been gained up to this point by saying that the existence of such a kingdom of God is a *Postulate* of reason. For two things are implied by that, viz. that there must—if we assume that there is a rational meaning in the history of humanity—be such a kingdom, but that nothing has as yet been made out on conclusive grounds as to the existence of that kingdom.

The expression is borrowed from Kant. He described the existence of God and the immortality of the human soul as Postulates of Practical Reason; since his time this term is more frequently met with in discussions on the Philosophy of Religion and on Apologetics. The difference—apart from the distinction

no objection to the use of the name, if only we are conscious of the relative inadequacy of the mode of expression. We are concerned with a supramundane reality, although it finds expression in the forms of our sense-bound mode of representation, a reality to which the kingdom of God, our chief good, appertains.

in content—is that we drop the more specific definition of the Reason of which we speak as *Practical* Reason. That is done intentionally. Kant's mode of describing it is due to the peculiar difference which he introduces between Speculative and Practical Reason; it is connected with the fact that the Postulates of Practical Reason are meant to subserve the purpose of combining together the two spheres of thought pertaining to theoretical knowledge and moral life. Instead of that we found that in the organisation of human knowledge which is required by the facts, there inevitably comes to be a point where Reason, *always practical in one aspect of it*, interposes with determinative effect, and that it is by starting precisely from this knowledge so determined that the way to the highest knowledge must be sought. If now at that point such a Postulate is obtained, we describe it as a Postulate of Reason simply. If the matter is pictorially represented we have not an arch which stretches from one pillar to another and connects both, while they are at first independent of one another, but we have the termination of a pyramid which mounts up step by step, and a termination, too, which answers to the character of knowledge as a whole, as subserving from the first a supreme practical purpose. But if the content of the Postulate here meant is in this way also different from that of the Kantian Postulates, and if its relation to knowledge as a whole is different from that which he assigns to them, yet in the fundamental conception there comes to be a leaning on Kant, which is brought out by the identity of expression.

Now, Kant does not go beyond the Postulates as

such. They indicate the extreme point which he reaches. Now, whether that is inevitable or not, at all events it is a defect which does not accord with the subjective need of assurance as to the highest knowledge. The rational proof as such also remains imperfect if the matter must end there, even granting that such stoppage is required by the facts. In that case we simply end in having a proof which does not get beyond probability. If we are not to end there, the eternal kingdom of God must have been proclaimed in the world, in history, by a *Divine Revelation.*

Let us understand precisely what this inference signifies. The Christian idea of the kingdom of God has been proved to be the rational, absolute idea of the chief good. The existence of the eternal supramundane kingdom of God is therefore a Postulate of reason. And from this Postulate there arises the *other Postulate* of a historical revelation of God which has the supramundane kingdom of God as its content. The argumentation is in the first instance merely hypothetical. Assuming—so runs the inference—that there is such a supramundane kingdom of God, one which stands to the life of men in the world and to its historical development in the relation previously discussed, or assuming, say, that this historical development on the whole as well as in detail is shaped for such a goal, in that case the eternal kingdom of God must also have been proclaimed in the history of men. *But that can have been done only by a Divine Revelation;* any other way is not possible at all. No Understanding, no Reason, leads by mere logical

inference from given facts to assurance as to *a fact which in itself does not belong to this world.* It can be proclaimed and become a certainty simply by becoming, although it is of a supramundane character, a factor in the history of men, and by interposing in their experience. That is, the effect can be produced only by means of Divine revelation. And further, this revelation in general must have the particular character which in the view of religious faith every revelation possesses. That is, it must be the communication of a good, more particularly of a chief good; but in and through the fact that it is so, it must at the same time be the proclamation of a consummate and conclusive truth. Consequently the Postulate of a supramundane kingdom of God in which lies the goal of human history is simply the Postulate of a *special revelation of that kingdom of God in history.* And here it may be expressly pointed out that this inference cannot be avoided by pointing to the inner experience in which the fact of the eternal kingdom of God must become a certainty to the individual. For such inner experience is itself possible only in relation to revelation; it originates only in and with the assumption of such revelation. The *inner dialectic of that faith* from which such personal experiences are derived immediately implies that. Again, if the chief good is of the character which we have come to know, the revelation of it can be sought only in the *history* of humanity (not, say, independently of that history, in the depths of the individual human soul). Therefore it must be said that the Postulate of the supramundane kingdom of God forms itself into the

other Postulate of a special Revelation of the kingdom in history.

Thus far the hypothetical inference goes. Whether there really is such a Revelation or not, whether the argumentation in pointing to it reaches the goal of confirmation, as to that only the reality, history itself, can inform us. Thus too in the preceding study on the chief good the historical fact of the Christian religion was likewise considered as a matter of course. Any other procedure would have meant self-deception and false abstraction. Indeed, it cannot be denied, whatever standpoint one adopts, that Christianity is one of the most momentous facts of human history. Now, in taking the historical reality simultaneously into consideration at this point likewise, we conclude that reason demands just what the Christian Church witnesses with regard to her origin as well as with regard to the permanent source of her life and of her power. The proof of the truth of Christianity is *the proof of the reasonableness and absoluteness of the faith reposed in the Christian Revelation.*

Now I expressly emphasise the fact that according to what has been said the faith reposed in the *Christian* Revelation is brought within the purview of the proof. I mean, there is not merely included in its scope in quite a general way, as was previously of course the understanding, the fact that a Divine revelation has been given, a revelation, however, with regard to which there is the further question what content it possessed and what was proclaimed in it. There is included in it, in quite a definite way, as appears from all that has already been said, our *concrete faith in the*

Christian Revelation, that faith as such. The history of the human race becomes intelligible as a whole only if there is such a revelation in it as that to which Scripture witnesses, and to which the Christian Church confesses adherence: therefore it is reasonable to believe in that revelation. Again, men take the only possible way to arrive at an answer to the question of the origin and final purpose of all things when they understand and interpret the world by starting with the highest result that has been disclosed to them in their history, by which their history gains unity and meaning: therefore it is reasonable to recognise in this revelation and its content that principle for interpreting the world which answers to reason. That is the intention of this proof; the reasonableness and absoluteness of the *Christian* faith are made good by it.

And now we maintain that in this proof the fundamental problem of theological doctrine, *the old question of the relation of Reason and Revelation*, also finds its solution. A real reconciliation of the principles is attained by it, a reconciliation with regard to which we previously found that on the old ground it was neither attained nor attainable at all: on the old ground—that, viz., of objective apprehension or of *knowledge* in regard to these questions. The *way* to the solution is indicated, it is true, even there. And it is no other than that which we are traversing: it must be shown that it is reasonable to believe in revelation. But the true conception could not be carried out under the presuppositions which determined theological tradition. Or more precisely, the mode in

which it was carried out and had in that connection to be carried out, prevented any reconciliation of the principles from being arrived at, entailing rather an infringement of the one by the other. On the ground of knowledge, the reasonableness of faith in revelation can be maintained only in such wise that Reason has its defects and imperfections made clear to it, and it is required to accept Revealed knowledge on authority and without a sincere appropriation of it—a course with which Reason never will be contented and never can. Furthermore, the transference of the question to this sphere of objective knowledge already occasions in itself a subordination of our Faith in Revelation to the judgment of Reason, such as runs counter to the interests of Faith. Therefore no reconciliation of the principles can be arrived at so long as the discussion of the question is carried on on this ground.

The matter assumes, on the other hand, quite a different form when we found on the perception that the highest knowledge can be established only by means of a practical idea, that of the chief good. For now it can be shown that Reason and Revelation meet in the *same conception of the chief good*, that chief good which the former requires as the true principle of a rational interpretation of the world, without, however, being able to attain it by its own resources, while Revelation proclaims it as an eternal fact. And then there is implied in that a *reconciliation of the principles* by which neither the one nor the other is compromised, in which they are completed precisely in and through each other. Reason finds in the existence of Revelation a confirmation of itself as

Reason; if there were not Revelation, the highest knowledge would remain incomplete, a Postulate or a hypothesis; on that very account the proper attestation of the highest knowledge is found not in Reason, but in Revelation. Reason could not be trusted with regard to this highest knowledge if there were not Revelation to attest it. And Revelation would not be really Revelation, the proclamation of fruitful and world-embracing truth, unless it were met by the demand of Reason. Here the position is similar to that of *religious certainty*. In respect to the latter also the subjective and the objective factors must meet and mutually penetrate each other. The subjective need in itself engenders no certainty, and just as little does the latter spring from the acceptance on authority of an objectively existing Revelation. Only where the subjective need lays hold of Revelation as objectively given and self-announcing is there such certainty attained. What makes Revelation as such intelligible is the subjective need; that on which certainty as such rests and to which it appeals is the existence of objective Revelation. In the same way Reason and Revelation mutually condition and require each other. We may repeat what has been said almost in the same words: what attests Revelation as such is the need shown by Reason; that on which Reason as such rests and to which it appeals is the existence of Revelation.

But in regard to one point this proof still needs completion. What has been taken into consideration in it in the first instance is only the kingdom of God as the content of Revelation and of the Christian faith. That, indeed, is the fundamental idea of the Christian

religion and the main content, properly speaking, of Divine Revelation. Christianity is, however, on the other hand, the religion of the *Atonement;* the Revelation of God in Christ contains as a further and essential head the proclamation of the love of God which justifies sinners and reconciles them to Himself. The proof therefore seems to be incomplete unless it also refers at the same time to this matter.

However, this completion naturally follows from what was previously said regarding the close and essential connection between the kingdom of God and the Atonement.[1] Here it only remains for us, founding on the exposition already given, to take up this further element in connection with the rational proof. Now that is done simply by looking to the consideration that the kingdom of God would not be for men at all as they exist empirically, if the message of Justification and Reconciliation were not combined with the preaching of it. Men cannot think of accepting the great gift of God in Christ if guilt interposes to separate

[1] *Das Wesen der christlichen Religion*, p. 312 ff. The notion of the Atonement and the kindred notions of Justification and the Forgiveness of sins always give expression merely to the fact that a hindrance has been removed or that the normal relation is established. But they do not state what it is that is now unhindered, or in what the normal relation consists. What decides on these points is the idea of the chief good, the idea which governs the religion in question. On it therefore depends among other things our understanding of the Atonement, etc. Now, the chief good as apprehended by Christianity is itself determined by ethical considerations. For that reason the Atonement cannot be conceived as proceeding from the side of man ; it must rather proceed from the side of God ; and the good works of men cannot be regarded as a condition of the Atonement, as they are rather expected only as its fruit. On the other hand, without the Atonement the chief good would not be attainable by man at all owing to his sin and guilt. These two realities, the chief good and the Atonement, are in every respect most intimately connected.

between them and a holy God, unless God blots out the guilt and purifies the conscience. Only by reconciling men to God was Christ able to set up the kingdom of God among mankind. Not by accident or by arbitrariness on God's part, but intrinsically and necessarily, are the two realities combined with each other—as was shown on the former occasion alluded to. If, therefore, it is reasonable to believe in a revelation which has the kingdom of God as its content, the same holds good with regard to faith in the Atonement. Owing to the essential interdependence of the two elements in Divine revelation, in view of the actual state of things among men, the proof naturally extends to this further element of revelation and of Christianity.

And in connection with this matter it remains to be considered what is the meaning of the proof here again, and what the meaning can only be. It is not, then, meant as a proof of the objective necessity of the Atonement. As to this aspect of the matter, it is always an *unfathomable free* decree of the love of God that He was willing to reconcile sinners to Himself in Christ, without and contrary to their desert. It is only shown that the Atonement is necessary *if* a realisation of the kingdom of God is to be attained. Here as always the historical fact of revelation, a revelation which has this and no other content, forms the presupposition of the proof. Reason cannot arrive by its own resources at the fact of the eternal kingdom of God as the purpose of the world and of history, or at most it reaches it as a conjecture (which, however, does not suffice). Just as little can it make out anything by its own means as to the fact of the Atonement,

of the Divine decree bearing upon it. Both required to be announced by Divine Revelation. And the first, moreover, would not suffice in any way by itself alone to make a safe conclusion possible as to the second. For *the conscience* would judge that guilt excludes us from participation in the kingdom of God. The Atonement must therefore by itself and *expressly* be a matter of Divine Revelation. The essential interdependence of the two doctrines always reaches only so far that we must conclude :—as it is only by the Revelation of the Kingdom of God that a rational interpretation of the world is rendered possible for us, so it is only through the Atonement effected by Christ that we are enabled to complete that interpretation.

Hence : the proof of Christianity is the proof of the reasonableness of the faith which is reposed in revelation, which has this and no other content. By faith in Christ we do not put ourselves in opposition to reason, but by that faith we attain first of all the unity of our personal life and also the consummation of our reason.

There remains the question whether the knowledge thus attained is in harmony with the rest of the knowledge which we men possess or can attain as the case may be, or whether a contradiction between the two kinds is to be feared. Hitherto this matter has remained unnoticed : we have simply sought on the path acknowledged to be right the *direct* proof of the supreme principle of all Christian knowledge, without looking about for such *possible conflicts*. But we must not pass by that question altogether. It is an imperative requirement of reason that no contradiction shall

prevail in our knowledge. By way of completing the direct proof we shall therefore have to show that any such drawback is precluded. As part of our task in doing so we shall have to bring forward simple inferences from the first three chapters. And in part some isolated points which must not remain undiscussed will have to be treated in connection with these.

And here now as respects the general question in the first instance, the truth holds good that a contradiction between Christian knowledge and man's common experimental knowledge of things generally is in no wise to be feared. That follows from the fact which has formerly been proved at sufficient length that the two bodies of knowledge are of quite different kinds. In the two cases the same set of facts is conceived and looked at from *totally different points of view.* Christian faith always acknowledges the world as a whole, and everything in particular in it as well, to be the work of God and to be a means for God's eternal purpose. As the object of Christian knowledge everything is placed in these last and highest relations. But of these relations common experience knows nothing, absolutely nothing whatever. Its aim is directed at the finite connections of things and only at these. How then should a contradiction be possible between the two kinds, whether on the whole or in detail? Things that are to contradict each other must lie somehow on the same ground. Just as little as a mathematical proposition and a moral judgment can contradict each other, can a contradiction intervene between Christian faith and our empirical knowledge of the world.

But if it is said that man is a *unity*, and so his knowledge too must be a *unity*, and therefore that, however true it may be that faith draws from one source and empirical science from another, there still remains the problem of reconciling the two, and so, *e.g.* where we have to do with the same body of facts, of gathering up the two forms of knowledge in *one* proposition; if it is affirmed that this is the real problem, and that only the solution of it guarantees the non-existence of a contradiction, the answer to all this also follows naturally from our previous discussions. Certainly man is a *unity*. Of course there remains the problem of reducing the two forms of knowledge relating to the same body of facts to harmony with each other. But that can and ought to be done only from the point of view which determines the comprehension of our knowledge as a whole in a *unity*, from the point of view, viz., of the *practical position of man in the world*. From that point of view the combination is obtained in quite a simple and easy manner. The fact that the Christian acknowledges a finite body of facts to be the work of God and the means for God's purpose, immediately involves the other fact that he discerns therein something that has to serve as material for moral action; but in order to be able to do so he must attend to the *finite* connections, and therefore even *as a Christian* he assumes in no wise an attitude of indifference towards such knowledge; even as a Christian he cannot possibly dispense with it. The completion by him of each of the two kinds of knowledge is not precluded; they are rather the two factors, demanding and conditioning each

other, of that position in the world and relatively to it which the Christian adopts and retains as a unity. If, on the other hand, the requirement alluded to is understood in the sense that the two judgments must be brought together in a *third*, that is simply an error which springs from a false appreciation of those judgments and their relation to one another. What experience teaches us is, and remains always, *relative knowledge*, determined by the finite purposes of the knowing mind; faith, on the contrary, knows of an absolute purpose and has to do with *absolute knowledge*. The unity lies in the proper arrangement of these purposes together; but the judgments of knowledge as such cannot be bent together and put into one. The finding of that unity may, it is true, in particular cases involve a practical problem which no one can solve without prayer and without the assistance of the Divine Spirit. But that is a matter by itself. In principle when we follow this path the reconciliation of the two spheres of knowledge is simple and easy.

The same thing recurs next on a large scale. I mean, while there is no contradiction between experience and faith in any particular instance, it is equally true that there is none between the Christian theory of the world and modern science. Often, of course, it is conceived that there is. Modern science, which resolves nature into processes of movement that are governed by laws, is supposed to be incompatible with Christian faith, which everywhere, even in nature, discerns God's power, God's dispensation and Providence. And it is intelligible how it has been possible for such an opinion to originate and take root among

large classes of people. The traditional habits of thought (even in theology) induce people to compare the two *immediately*. Then under that presupposition the overpowering impression which the results of modern Physical Science produce readily leads to such a judgment. But although thus psychologically intelligible, the judgment itself is nevertheless false. We must never aim at comparing and conjoining the two immediately. For if that is done, both faith and science are vitiated. And quite naturally, too. Each of these modes of looking at the world aims at being *complete* in its kind, and suffers no intervention of foreign points of view, without which, however, one cannot get along with such attempts at reconciliation.

These attempts themselves may be divided into two groups; in the one set the emphasis is laid on the results of Physical Science, in the other on the knowledge of Faith. The principle of the former is that in the eternal laws pervading nature the *immutable* expression of the Divine will is to be recognised; they culminate in opposition to miracles. Now that such a view, if it is not tacitly corrected from time to time, cannot be reconciled in practice with the Christian faith does not require to be shown. The God whose will has to be realised to oneself by the intermediate conception of *immutable* laws of nature is not, it must be allowed, the living God of Christian faith. But science too suffers harm on such a view. Its conclusions have in this way a stamp of *absolute validity* impressed upon them which does not answer to the truth: but where the *truth* suffers, *genuine* science also suffers, no matter whether too much or too little

is made over to it. On the other hand, the other attempts at reconciliation, which lay the emphasis on faith and the knowledge peculiar to it, also, it is true, hold the action of God to be realised as a rule by laws as intermediaries, but make the reservation that exceptions are always possible and in particular cases become actual. Now it is obvious that for the scientific view that is an *absurd* supposition: he who speaks of "laws" in the sense of science must hold them to be valid without exception, because otherwise his language loses its meaning. Here what has to be brought prominently out is the other fact that by this means faith too is vitiated; on its part it will indeed have *nothing whatever* to do with these laws, but seeks to recognise in everything the *immediate* dispensation and arrangement of the Divine will. Such attempts at reconciliation, as they appear in sundry varieties, rest one and all on the error already mentioned, viz. on the assumption that the two modes of view are homogeneous enough to allow of such a reconciliation and conjunction. In truth that is not the case. In truth by this means Faith as well as Science is *vitiated*.

Here again the true way to reach unity is no other than that which was treated above: unity must be sought in the practical position occupied by man in the world. Both science and Christian faith spring from the need felt by the personal mind to dominate the world and to assert itself together with its purposes in the world; only in the one case we have to do with the purposes of the mental life which runs its course in the world, in the other case with the absolute purpose as it extends beyond the world, the apprehen-

sion and attainment of which first of all lead man to the consummation of his personal life. Here again the point in which both coincide is the moral problem. For the work of science is an important means for the solution of that problem, and only in and through his application to the same problem can the Christian attain his absolute purpose. Instead of contradicting each other, therefore, *modern Science and Christian Faith* together form elements of Protestant Christian culture which answer to each other and mutually demand each other. I say, Protestant culture, because in Catholicism another combination of Science and Faith is employed, a combination with which we have nothing further here to do.

But the assertion that contradiction is precluded in this combination which is here advocated may be proved especially by the circumstance that in such connection the two modes of view are at length carried out fully and without abridgment. All thought of pressing on Physical Science the duty of attending to supernatural factors is completely precluded—the fact being apparent that even *the most thoroughly convinced Christian*, as a worker with others at the problems of such science, leaves these factors alone. It is implied by the very nature of the case that that must happen, and that anything else is impossible. The sole reservation always made, a reservation demanded by the nature of the case, apart altogether too from Christian faith, is that the results of that investigation bear a relative character and can never lay it aside. Therefore they leave room for the other view that the Christian knows himself to be encom-

passed and attended on his path by the wonderful dispensations of his God. This view also is completely carried out, and that too with the consciousness that it is the last and highest truth: here the consideration of law (in the sense of science) is always entirely excluded.

But if the question of "miracle" in the pointed sense of the word is raised, we have to say that a "miracle" as "an exception to the laws of nature," is nothing but a falsely formed notion, one which springs from that *erroneous* combination of the two modes of view which we have just characterised and rejected. The "laws of nature" are nothing real; how then can I affirm that there are exceptions to them? What there is in reality answering to the scientific conception of laws of nature is the fact that the regularity of the course of nature permits the human mind to grasp that course by means of such formulæ. At the same time it is true that every concrete occurrence is something by itself after all, nothing being accounted for without a residue by any formula, and that we must always be prepared for unforeseen exceptions. Again, an endless amount of things happen which it has not hitherto been possible to subject to such an interpretation by a law. If it were otherwise, science itself would really have nothing more to do. But neither the one thing nor the other is the miracle that is meant. Rightly defined, a miracle must be declared to be *an extraordinary and unusual* occurrence in nature, the historical relations of which, its *religious and moral import* as derived from these, awaken in a special manner faith in God's living government of the world (which faith embraces everything, even what is least,

and no matter whether it is construed in accordance with natural law or not). To emphasise in such a case the special intervention of God is only permissible in the sense of that faith which does not doubt that everything comes from God *after the same manner*. Now, that there are such miracles who will deny? Who will be surprised at our finding them especially in the history of Revelation, in the life of Jesus Christ? But we must go a step farther still. Among the miracles in this narrower sense are such as run counter to the explanation got from "laws of nature," *i.e.* represent a deviation from the course which is otherwise explicable in that way. Can we decree now that anything of that kind is impossible? That those should do so who are led by modern Physical Science and imperceptibly become adherents of a sort of new Natural Religion is perfectly intelligible. That Christian theologians, who as such consciously acknowledge their acceptance of the Christian faith, should assent to that view, and should hold that judgment to be one of the sources of their power, I do not understand. Or else I can only explain it to myself psychologically as due to the impression which the results of modern Physical Science, aided by traditional but erroneous habits of thought, have produced. In any case such a judgment is not well-founded. Or should the assumption that miracles in this narrower sense are possible pave the way for the love of marvels, for superstition and similar aberrations? If so, that assumption would of course be serious. For one constituent part of Christianity quite as much as faith in God's living power in the world is the other element

that everywhere we resolutely count on finite causes, for the reason that the moral work demanded of us so requires. But in fact is there a more effective, or indeed *another absolutely effective*, safeguard against all such aberrations than simple inflexible *Christian faith in God?* I should think not. But on the other hand that very faith in God does not suffer itself to lose hold of the truth that the earth is the Lord's, that everything comes from Him, that here and in all quarters He works miracles which daily encompass us, and that according to His good pleasure He also uses extraordinary means to enable faith to trace His presence and omnipotence. The conclusion therefore must be that here there is no contradiction in our knowledge and in our position in the world.

But now in one other point it is supposed that after all an irreconcilable opposition between Christian faith and modern science comes to light. God's purpose in and with *men* is posited by Christian faith as the purpose of the worlds. But the theatre for men and their history is *the earth*. Modern science, however, has taught us to recognise this earth on which we live as a vanishing point in the universe. Is it consistent then with such knowledge to declare a kingdom of God which has to be realised among the inhabitants of the earth to be the purpose of the worlds, a faith determined by that conviction to be the highest knowledge answering to reason? Is there not here a contradiction of the kind mentioned lying open to view? I do not think that can be affirmed on good grounds. However, some remarks are necessary on the subject.

In the first place, as appears from all that has already been said, it is an established fact that we can arrive at a highest grade of knowledge, a view of the world as a whole, only from our *human* standpoint, or can, say, give a sketch of such knowledge. He who does not renounce the highest knowledge in every form—and he who does so judges unreasonably—must conform himself to this inevitable position of matters. It would be unchanged although one declined to take his stand on human history and wished rather to attempt to start with the *knowledge of the universe*. The sole consequence would rather be that such an one would abstract from the peculiarity of human life as mental, from its concrete definiteness, and would take *human existence as it forms a part of finite existence*, and is therefore for an abstract view equal to everything that exists, as his point of departure. But that cannot be justified by any rational rule. No one can even think of it who does not commit the error in principle of wanting to attain the highest knowledge by means of an extension of common knowledge. Apart from that it is impossible that we can be on the right way to the highest knowledge when we purposely forget the more exact and more definite knowledge we have, in order to set out with the most general Category that can be conceived, one which is as abstract as it is meagre, that of Existence. In short, if there is to be a highest type of knowledge, and that is indispensable when we have regard to history, it can be gained only from a standpoint which is chosen in the history of the human race; and the extension of the universe, which is for us unlimited, and of which

modern Astronomy gives us a glimpse, cannot be resorted to as the ground on which it is determined.

Further, this challenge addressed to the Christian theory of the world is based on an appreciation of things according to a *merely quantitative standard* which is palpably false. The fact that the earth, as it is said, is a vanishing point in the universe does not in itself by any means prevent its being true that on it that history is running its course in which the purpose of the worlds is to find its realisation. Or is not man too a vanishing point when regarded in comparison with the whole earth? And is the belief thereby refuted that in virtue of his mental endowments he is qualified to have *dominion* over the earth? But how then can it be inferred from the place which the earth was said to hold in the sum of things that it cannot in a corresponding manner possess an importance in that sum with which all else there is cannot compare? Such an assertion reckons on the impression which is *instinctively* formed on a comparison of the earth and the universe. On the ground of *rational* reflection it cannot be made good.

Finally, it follows from the nature of the highest knowledge as a practical faith that we can, and indeed must, decline to regard man's scientific knowledge of the universe as an integral part of the highest knowledge. It is true that the relative infinity of the sum of things will always appear to Christian faith a proof of the infinite might and majesty of the Creator, and as such a proof will be precious to it. But we cannot make the universe intelligible as a means for the kingdom of God. This undertaking cannot be *theor-*

etically carried out even as respects the earth's general relations to the other worlds: in every instance it is imposed on us only as a *practical undertaking*—one, however, which from the nature of the case comes to nothing when we are confronted by the universe. In general the theoretical problem can be treated only in so far as the Christian faith is admitted, and there results from it that attempt at a Philosophy of Nature which we previously alluded to. But that attempt will refer to the universe as well as to the development of the earth, although only in the exceedingly general way which the meagreness of our knowledge of the universe implies. For the rest, the line to be followed here is determined by two considerations. On the one hand, we can and must neither deny nor affirm that our God, the Lord and Creator of the universe, pursues purposes in and with it even apart from the earth and its inhabitants. On the other hand, we must maintain in the most positive manner that these possible purposes coalesce with the purpose of the world as recognised by us, and therefore, if they do exist, presuppose a mental and historical life in the heavenly bodies which in its essence and core coincides with ours: that follows from the Christian conviction that it is participation *in the Divine life* itself to which Christ leads men, and that consequently there can be no supreme Divine purpose which surpasses that which is posited in and with that object.

But our knowledge has reference not merely to the world of sense, and beyond that to the universe as extending in Time and Space and for us infinite; it has reference equally to the mental life of men as it

develops and takes form in history. There remains, therefore, the possibility that a contradiction may arise between Christian faith and this part of our knowledge. And in the abstract this *possibility* cannot be denied.

In general, it is true, such a contradiction may be held to be precluded, to be impossible. It is precisely from the facts of history that we have derived the proof of the reasonableness of the faith reposed in the Christian revelation. And already, too, we have mentioned the fact that Freedom, that human guilt springing from it, introduces an irrational element into history: that element cannot be turned against the Christian faith, which teaches us to understand human guilt without, however, declaring it to be necessary, an assertion which would contradict its essential nature. But if much remains unintelligible in detail, even of what we see daily before our eyes, we can content ourselves with the thought that our knowledge is fragmentary, with waiving the claim to possess perfect knowledge, and with living in that *Faith* which impels us to do our endeavour to secure improvement, and for the rest teaches us to *vanquish* what is unintelligible: the right to such self-restraint is involved from the first in the standpoint here adopted. However, if a contradiction accordingly does not require, generally speaking, to be feared, it is not meant that such an issue cannot come to light in connection with a single definite point, viz. *faith in revelation*. And that is the possibility regarding which I said it cannot *as such* be denied and must not be denied. The following is a more particular account of the matter.

Christian faith rests on the revelation of God in the history which reaches its completion in Christ. It includes, therefore, an affirmation as to historical matters, in particular as to the personal historical life of Jesus Christ. And it does so too in such wise that this affirmation as to what is historically *actual* is essential and indispensable to it, so that the faith itself stands or falls with the truth of that affirmation. From that there can be no deduction. The distinction drawn between a historical and an ideal Christ, by means of which an attempt has been made to prove that it is impossible in principle for a contradiction to arise here, must in all its forms be definitively and for ever rejected, because if really carried out it involves as its precise issue the destruction of our faith in the Christian revelation. All depends on the fact that in that faith we have to do not merely with an idea, with a thought, but with a *historical reality:* the historical person of Jesus Christ, His relation to God, has been essentially different from what is seen in the case of all other men; He is the Son who knows the Father, through the knowledge of whom all men are meant to come and can come to the knowledge of God. This fact is *the foundation of Christian faith and Christian hope.* The Christian feels what is a necessary consequence when he feels the denial of this fact to be a denial of the Christian faith. It is what the religious certainty of the Christian is based upon.

But if we have to do with a historical fact, we have to do with something that is not merely given to faith, but can equally well be matter for *objective* historical study. Here, therefore, there remains a point where

it is possible to refute the Christian faith. For if it can be demonstrated by means of historical investigation beyond the possibility of doubt that the Person of Jesus Christ is not of that nature which is assumed in the Christian faith, the faith must be held in that case to be refuted, to be *untrue*. This logical inference cannot be avoided. What is thereby affirmed is only the reverse side of what has just been said : if the fact of the historical revelation of God really has a fundamental significance for Christian faith, the proof that that revelation is not truth, but an illusion, is a destruction of the faith itself. The one thing is inseparably connected with the other.

Now it will be asked, of course, whether it can be conceived to be the case that by such historical argumentation a Christian should allow himself to be led away from the faith which approves itself in all the experiences of his life, the faith with which his whole life is entwined. In reply it has to be said that that case certainly will not occur, since from the nature of the subject the argumentation in question can never take the form of that which involves compulsion; and the inward certainty of faith itself appears as decisive evidence against its correctness. But assuming for a moment that the abstract possibility referred to were realised, that such counter-evidence were furnished—would the great *general* truths of Christianity thereupon cease to be true ? would the highest ideals of humanity that history knows thereupon lose their splendour ? Our thought instinctively rises up against that assumption, and it is probably from *that* circumstance principally that it has to be explained how the attempt to separate the

question of the truth of Christianity from the historical question referring to the Person of its Founder always springs up anew. Nevertheless, that procedure is false. The two questions are inseparably bound up together, as the following consideration shows.

The first and immediate consequence of such a historical refutation of Christianity would be that religious *certainty* would have to cease, and where a person was convinced of the truth of the refutation would cease, too, without fail. The *content* of the faith would not yet lose its significance in consequence, but would in the first instance be affirmed as a Postulate, as a hypothetical truth of reason. But the matter could not permanently rest there. The conscience in its anguish can never find rest in a conjecture. Without faith in the revelation of that love of God in Christ which forgives sins that conscience would have to despair. But since the impulse to seek life is indestructible as such, despair can never be the last word for the community or even for the majority. A way of escape must therefore be sought otherwise. But such a way can only be found when the moral requirement is somehow weakened, when personal responsibility is put in question. On this basis, therefore, the chief and fundamental truth of Christianity itself becomes matter of doubt and practical denial. On the other hand, we have the imperative consideration that if the truth of Christianity is presupposed, there would have to be a corresponding revelation of God in the world (p. 382). If, therefore, it were demonstrated that there was no such revelation, that would be identical with a real demolition of the truth of reason, that

being the only form which Christian truth could still claim to possess. It is of no use, therefore, to shade away the facts of the case. The refutation of the faith reposed in the Christian revelation would necessarily take the form of a refutation of Christianity itself; it would be identical with an overthrow of the highest historical ideals of humanity. Not, of course, as if every individual who doubts revelation therefore denies the latter also. In every particular case such consequences may encounter incalculable delay owing to inherited dispositions and an acquired bent of feeling. But nevertheless, if we look at the broad and general aspect of the matter, they are fully realised. If we cease to believe in Christ, our whole civilisation must in process of time sink back from the stage attained by Christianity to that of heathenism—there can be no other result than that. The signs of the times, too, certainly do not contradict the statement.

But if there seems to be implied in this a possible exposure of the Christian faith to danger, there is on the other hand strong support hereby supplied to faith. He who cannot allow himself to despair of the highest ideals of humanity and of the reason in history will have to decide for faith in *the revelation of God in Christ.* And as respects historical research itself it is really not the case at all that the denial of faith would be favoured by it. Only a theory of the world which has ceased to be Christian, not historical research itself, leads to such results. True, that research cannot in itself constrain one to have faith in the revelation of God in Christ. In order that one may arrive at that conclusion faith is required, that

view of reason which surveys the world as a whole. The historical facts, however, do not tell against but for him who in faith combines them in the judgment that a revelation of God has to be recognised in Christ. And since that faith has reason at the same time on its side, there is no real danger to be feared from this possible refutation of Christianity. The reflections just offered on the subject have not the significance of intimating such a danger, but the different significance of bringing to consciousness the fact that faith in the perfected revelation of God in the personal historical life of Jesus Christ is the inalienable foundation of the Christian faith, and thereby also of the highest truth of reason.

Consequently we affirm that the apprehension lest a contradiction may arise between the rest of man's knowledge and the knowledge which faith attains is unfounded. Christianity approves itself in this indirect way also as the truth which answers to reason.

It still remains for us to draw an inference in closing. It is one relating to the *form assumed by Dogma and Dogmatics*, and is no other than that which has already been mentioned in the hints given in the Introduction (I. p. 20). For something has already been said there as to the fact that the nature of the *proof* inevitably helps to determine Christian knowledge and the function of Dogmatics. That assertion has been confirmed too by the studies composing the first Division. If the Church, in seeking the proof of its faith, has to proceed on the supposition that an advance is made from Faith to Knowledge, that on the basis of Faith a Knowledge of the objects of Faith is aspired to, the

Dogma of the Church must also in that case consist of *intellectual tenets*—the development as a matter of fact having taken that course. But in that case the function of Dogmatics is also as a direct consequence established in the same sense: it becomes the science of the *objects* of Faith. Indeed, it was originally so conceived, and to this day it is so conceived in quite a paramount degree. If, on the other hand, the proof of Christianity is of the character here set forth, it follows by parity of reasoning that the doctrine or Dogma of the Church must consist of articles of *Faith*, and that the function of Dogmatics or of the System of Belief lies in that direction: it becomes in that case the science of the Christian *Faith*. Consequently a far-reaching inference of this kind results from the nature of the proof here presented. We must go into the matter somewhat more particularly.

The proof as it has been presented by us applies to the Christian *Faith* as such, and in no wise, on the other hand, to the articles of ecclesiastical dogma: it rather rests on the most positive denial of those scientific and philosophical methods to which dogma owes its origin. It therefore demands also that in ecclesiastical doctrine and in Dogmatics we should rest satisfied with a development of the Christian Faith, *i.e.* that each of the articles of the Christian Faith should retain *definitively* the form of an article of Faith and should not overstep that limit. Apologetics and Dogmatics are taken entirely apart from one another. The sole proof of the general truth of a proposition that has to be presented *within the province of Dogmatics* consists of the derivation of it from the principle which was pre-

viously proved to be valid (in Apologetics). In other words, every proposition must be proved to be an integral and necessary link in the chain of knowledge appertaining to the Christian Faith; but apart from that no further proof is requisite or possible. The System of Belief is the science of the Christian Faith; *i.e.* its function is to exhibit that Faith with the care and exactness distinctive of scientific work.

By this means it comes into line with the other functions of *positive* science. We have to do with a *given* reality, with the representation and description of it down to the finest veins of thought. The fact that this reality does not belong to the world of sense, but to the mental and historical life of humanity, does not compromise the claim to the character of positive science. Otherwise, everything else that is not apprehensible by the senses, and consequently the most important elements of reality, would have to be excluded from that domain—a course which no one will advocate. Where we have such an organisation of Dogmatics, the employment of Reason (it should more properly be said, of the Understanding) can therefore be described in truth as an *usus formalis*. The decision in the *material* sense lies with Revelation and with it alone. Reason co-operates just in the same way as it does elsewhere, and generally where the tasks of positive science are concerned. The fact that the *authority* of Revelation holds good is as certainly self-evident as it is understood in all science as a matter of course that the reality, the object, and not the preference of human reason, decides as to the results. Hence it becomes possible to carry into effect

in this way what orthodox Dogmatics has attempted. After the principle of Revelation has been proved in Apologetics to be the principle which answers to reason, Revelation alone decides as to the content of doctrine; Reason falls to be considered only as a formal instrument for scientific work. By orthodox Dogmatics this rule has been set up and aimed at. It has not been carried into effect by it. That could not be, because owing to the conditions of the mental life of its time that system of Dogmatics was held fast to the ground of Scholasticism. The possibility of shaping Dogmatics after the form mentioned is derived only from the altered circumstances of modern science, is the consequence which results from these for Theology and Dogmatics.

But, on the other hand, what Dogmatics or the system of belief, in the form here advocated, has to accomplish is the solution of a *speculative* task. The nature of all speculation consists in this, that it deduces its propositions from a principle the truth of which forms its presupposition. Such a principle is supplied to Dogmatics in the idea of Revelation *with all that is contained in it*, in Faith in Christ. For the proof of Revelation is not furnished in the sense that there still remains the question what forms the content of that Revelation and what it has pleased God to reveal; it applies to the Divine Revelation which has been given to the *Christian* Church and which is living in its Faith. The Atonement and the Kingdom of God, as these may be comprised in the conception of the *blessing of salvation*, form the content of that Revelation. Or,

to view the matter differently: the living Christ who includes in Himself all who believe in Him so as to form the unity of *one* supramundane life, and who as the Head of this Church is at the same time its High-Priest who intercedes for it — that is the principle of all articles of faith; from this they are derived: they are nothing but the unfolding of this faith in Christ. The principles, again, of this derivation or unfolding are given in what I might call *the immanent Logic of a system of Religion or Faith*, a Logic which is everywhere as such historically demonstrable. All types of faith rest on an outline which is formally the same, exhibit the same articulation in their fundamental features. The *content* of the particular propositions is determined by the *material* principle of the religion or species of faith concerned. The comprehensiveness and richness, too, appearing in the articulation of the faith depends on that principle. But the *formal* equality is not thereby annulled. And so there is furnished by this means something like an immanent Logic of Faith, by which the speculative derivation of the particular propositions from the principle has to be guided. The fact that this Logic is *historically given* and demonstrable guarantees to the scientific argumentation determined by it its *objective* character. In a much higher measure is such security given here than in the case of theoretical speculations which appeal to the "necessity of thought," a necessity, however, which in these regions, withdrawn as they are from experience, has no decisive objective support. But the opinion which has been expressed that such a consideration of other religions and types

of faith may lead to a lowering of Christianity to a level beneath its own is unfounded. It fails to recognise that it must be possible for the Logic referred to to be proved mainly by Christianity itself, *i.e.* by the process of thought exhibited in the New Testament. That Logic rather serves among other things to convict of error, and that in an objective manner, all *abridgments and transformations* of the Christian faith such as might issue from the *philosophical* ideas of the theological inquirer.

But in another way still the speculative character of the function of Dogmatics comes to be realised. Christian faith, like the faith of every religion, is faith in God, and all knowledge that springs from faith is *knowledge of God.* No proposition forms part of the Christian faith which is not either knowledge of God or an immediate result of that knowledge. The movement of thought presented in *Faith* goes from above downwards, not from below upwards, from God to the world and man, not from man and the world to God. But from that fact also the natural affinity of the system of faith with a *speculative* (Platonic) system of thought is inferred. The process of thought is speculative in its nature; it does not spring from the reflection of the Understanding. This latter species of reflection has to do with the scientific discovery of the articles of faith, but must not be imported into those articles themselves; the system of thought peculiar to faith rests on that process of thought which is of a *speculative* description.

And I believe it is not unimportant to draw attention to this position of matters in the special circumstances

of theology at present. The conception of the function of Dogmatics here presented and defended, when referred to its historical connection, is nothing but the reform of the system of belief which was contemplated by Schleiermacher and at first attempted by him. For the aim of that reform really was to give faith a secure position as a peculiar sphere of knowledge, and to develop the knowledge of the Christian faith from its own sources, those sources which are independent of the explanation of the world furnished by philosophy. But now, in the hands of Schleiermacher himself things already took such a form that his undertaking, instead of being a presentation of the faith, contracted a tendency to become a body of reflections on the pious conditions of feeling in the believer—a fact which I do not require to go back upon here again, as it has previously been elucidated at sufficient length.[1] Above all, the productions which can be traced back to Schleiermacher's influence have followed these lines. At the same time, too, the influence of Apologetic considerations came partly into play, a matter, however, which does not immediately fall to be considered here. I have mentioned the subject here in order to point out that nothing can be more erroneous than to give

[1] *Das Wesen der christlichen Religion*, p. 103 ff. In his *Glaubenslehre*, Schleiermacher declares the articles of faith to be conceptions of pious states of feeling set forth in language. On that view the point does not appear to come in question at all whether they are objectively true or not, if they only rightly express the state of feeling. As a matter of fact, however, all articles of faith are meant to be objectively true (note at I. p. 8). Schleiermacher himself has been obliged in his prosecution of the *Glaubenslehre* to do justice to that fact. The way in which he has done justice to it is by deriving the several articles by logical inference from the fact of subjective piety.

such a turn to the system of belief. In view of this state of things it seems to me to be of special importance to emphasise the fact that the knowledge of faith is knowledge of God, and that accordingly the process of thought peculiar to faith is of a speculative character. Only by preserving throughout our attention to this circumstance can we succeed in really carrying out and permanently securing the reform of the system of belief which was contemplated by Schleiermacher and for which he paved the way.

In the early Church the most important dogmas resulted from the combination of faith with speculative thought. In them the affinity between the two finds expression. Then matters rested till the time of Kant and Schleiermacher in the theological tradition thereby created. Through them a break, as it were, was first formed in tradition, and to a great extent there came in place of knowledge referring to God, or of conclusions dominated by the knowledge of God, reflections of the kind mentioned. In this change, doubtless, a renovation of the Christian system of belief is heralded, the starting-point of which appears in the Lutheran Reformation, and the real completion of which in future (though of course the joint work of generations may still be necessary for that) will signify the final triumph of the Reformation of Luther over Scholasticism. But for that completion it will be requisite that the character of subjectivity in our reflection shall be eliminated, and that the character of the knowledge of faith as knowledge of God shall have full effect given to it. For only then will the new movement have brought about a real transformation of the tradition in

doctrine, while preserving everything that is warranted in it.

Now it may be asked, it is true, whether the two assertions which have now been made as to the function of Dogmatics really accord with one another. On the one hand it is supposed to be analogous to the other functions of positive science, and to consist in the representation of a given spiritual reality; on the other hand it is supposed to be of a speculative nature, and its conclusions are taken to be a creation of that thought which is shaped by speculation. As a matter of fact each of these characters experiences a restriction of no inconsiderable importance proceeding from the other. What is undertaken is, it is true, the representation of a given reality, viz. the Christian faith. But that faith can only be represented when it is *developed out of its principle*. There remains, therefore, greater scope here for the individual judgment of the scientific mind than in the case of most of the other undertakings of positive science. And the development of thought by means of speculation comes to be of a peculiar nature again from the fact that the principle of it is not the notion of God, but the thought of the blessing of salvation. For it is implied by that that the *starting-point* of all considerations lies not in the transcendence of the Divine nature, but in the concrete medium of actual Christian piety, that the guiding idea is of a *religious* character and contains the element in which the fellowship of God with men consists. But if the one character is thus restricted by the other, it also holds good that the two are quite compatible with each other. Everywhere, *i.e.* in all parts of Christian

doctrine, thought must begin with this given centre of the circle of Christian thought; but everywhere the *result* must be a conception of Christian knowledge in which its character as knowledge of God appears, as truth founded on God, on His nature and will.

To such an organisation of Dogmatics as that here advocated, according to which it has not to attempt a scientific knowledge of the objects of faith, but a scientifically exact and careful representation of the Christian faith, it is, however, not unfrequently objected that it signifies an abandonment of the full truth of Christianity. It is said, if we are convinced that we have to do in the matter of faith with spiritual supersensuous realities—and without having that conviction no one can confess adherence to the Christian faith—we have also to draw the inference that an objective and consequently a scientific knowledge of these realities must to some extent be possible; he therefore who denies that fact or sets it aside thereby renounces one-half of the truth of Christianity. But however plausible that argument sounds it is nevertheless false, from whatever point of view the matter may be regarded.

For if it is understood in the sense that by the denial Christian truth itself suffers injury or loss, precisely the opposite is the fact. History teaches that the attempt to arrive at a knowledge and scientific apprehension of the objects of faith has entailed a loss for the Christian religion. That process was an integrant factor in the development by which Christianity took shape as Catholicism on the ground of the civilised Græco-Roman world. At the Reformation the reaction against it succeeded; in

opposition to it the significance and the *standpoint of Faith* were again enforced at the Reformation. The Reformation requires a form to be imparted to the truth in which it becomes intelligible as a confession of Faith. The Evangelical Church and theology are therefore thrown back on the Dogmatics which develops the knowledge of Faith, and does not consist after the manner of Scholasticism of reflections on the objects of faith. Only thus does theology respond to the interpretation and practice of Christianity which the Church of the Reformation has attained. Only thus can it do justice to the task imposed on it in that Church, which finds itself at length thrown back on pure doctrine according to the Word of God as the principal means for the cultivation of piety. For on that condition the truth can be enforced that opinion is always only a part of the total act of faith, an act which rests as a whole on man's personal life and grows out of it: the articles of faith as a whole become intelligible at the same time as a rule for the inner life, for the piety of the Christian, and the confession of adherence to them as subjection to that rule, as man's aspiration after the pure ideal. It is no less true that in this way the system of belief becomes a body of material directions for Christian preaching and for instruction in Christian truth. It exhibits every article in those intimate relations to man's personal life, in which his adoption of it leads him into the way of life everlasting. That signifies, therefore, absolutely no injury to Christian truth, but the elevation of it to the stage of expression which answers to the stage of the development of Christianity that

was attained in the Evangelical Church by the Reformation.

But the misgiving referred to may also be differently interpreted. It is feared that the content of Dogmatics will be substantially *diminished*, if such an organisation of the subject is adopted. As a matter of fact, everything is excluded that cannot be an object of the knowledge pertaining to *Faith* or does not result immediately from it. And that leads at some points to a restriction of the compass of Dogmatics as it is otherwise established by tradition. But apart altogether from the question whether such a reduction is to be regarded as a loss at all, there could only be slight abridgments involved. Undoubtedly our mode of looking at the subject becomes *entirely* different from that which is current among us as the issue of Scholastic tradition. The same objects are shown in a different light, according as they are viewed from the standpoint of faith or from that of the reflection on the content of faith which is referred to the Understanding: that cannot and must not be otherwise. But yet they are the same supersensuous realities as formerly that are dealt with. Much that cannot immediately be the object of the knowledge pertaining to faith, and which cannot be handled by the system of belief, reappears as a problem growing out of faith and belonging to the *Philosophy of History*. The fact that the whole task of the Philosophy of History springs from the "highest knowledge" in the sense here meant has previously (p. 201) been shown. Inasmuch as the Christian faith rests on the historical revelation of God, it has so essentially to

do with history that some of the questions of the Philosophy of History which have reference to things in their totality belong to Dogmatics itself. Thus, *e.g.*, we have the question of the origin of evil, and one directly affecting faith, the question of the *necessity* of Christ's death for salvation. Only they are now discussed on this view under the *presupposition* of the truth of the faith, not in order to establish or explain it. And they appear as problems in the Philosophy of History in the simple sense of the word, not in the sense of Gnosticism. I believe, therefore, that the misgivings which are alleged, even if they are thus understood, are not justified.

There remains a final consideration which is wont to come in to influence these misgivings, and may be understood to form part of them. I refer to the interest of Apologetics as such. Some cannot get rid of the thought that the general truth of the Christian faith must be made good by the fact that the content of it can be an object of scientific knowledge. But I know not what could be more groundless than that idea. In this regard the view here defended does not spring from a subjective opinion or a philosophical tendency, but is based on a manifest fact. It is based on the fact, viz., that science has become different *in kind* from what it was at the time when it appeared the natural and self-evident course to view the knowledge of God as the consummation of man's *scientific* knowledge of the world. This species of Apologetics is for ever at an end. A *direct* combination of science and faith is to-day impossible. That is to say, matters may of course temporarily end there within the pre-

cincts of theology, and those who are already convinced may hold such Apologetics to be efficacious. But that is not the Apologetics which the Church requires. It requires a species of Apologetics by which it can show and approve itself to be *in our time and for our mental life* the possessor of eternal truth. But to such a species we are led only by a proof of the kind here furnished, though others may know how to present it better and more successfully. If, therefore, the misgiving spoken of means anything of this sort, we can only meet it by saying that it rests on a misunderstanding of the actual state of things. The fact that through Christ we attain among other things the consummation of our knowledge can only be demonstrated if the paramount importance of the *practical* point of view in *all* our knowledge is exhibited, and if we refrain accordingly from presenting in Dogmatics anything but the knowledge which pertains to faith.

CONCLUSION.

We shall now attempt, in closing, to gather up the result of our discussions in some few propositions. In doing so we do not aim at repetition. With respect to the proof of the propositions our inquiry itself has to be compared. Here our object is simply to gather up the subject, to allow in closing of a clear view over the whole field of our demonstration. And in the first instance we look at the proof itself as it has been developed in the second Division. In a further series of propositions the attempt has then to be made to combine this proof with the historical knowledge gained in the first Division.

Now, as the *first* and most important proposition, there must be placed at the head of all others that which affirms that it is *impossible* by means of common knowledge or positive science, and on the paths followed by them, to attain a highest grade of knowledge, *i.e.* an apprehension of the First Cause and the Final Purpose of all things. And this consideration of possibility or impossibility is the one which is absolutely decisive, because the fundamental question is always: What *can* I know? But our proposition expresses a perception which has gained ground at this day among the largest classes of people. Undoubtedly the manner in which it is established is

not everywhere the same; in this matter a certain diversity prevails. It can, however, be affirmed all the more positively that the perception itself is not an opinion of the philosophical schools, but something which imposes itself, independently of all philosophy, as actually given in experience. It is nothing but a necessary correlative of modern science, which—unintentionally—has been led by its problems and successes to mark out its course in such a way that a result of the kind we speak of cannot be conceived even as a possible ideal goal for it.

In the *second* place, in closest connection with this first proposition we have found that man's knowledge of the world never reaches an ideal (Divine) knowledge, but always retains a human, finite, relative character. This too is a truth which is recognised and maintained by many at the present day, although it receives various modifications and is formulated in various ways. We recognised the ground of this truth in the fact that while our knowledge must never be arbitrarily bound up with practical purposes, it is always, as shown by its whole nature and its origin, subordinated to supreme practical purposes. Whence it followed at the same time that a *purely theoretical* knowledge of the First Cause and the Final Purpose of all things would never form the consummation of our real knowledge, because the latter itself is by no means a pure product of the theoretical mind.

In the *third* place, it is affirmed that in the two propositions now stated all is said that can be gathered for the solution of the question of the highest knowledge from a discussion of the Theory of Knowledge.

For it results from the character of our knowledge as depicted in those two propositions, that no analysis of the process of knowledge, however careful, can bring to light any other result than just this that a highest grade of knowledge can never be attained by following the path of pure theory; and consequently the decision as to that knowledge must be drawn from other tribunals than those at which any consideration referring to the Theory of Knowledge can be put forward. But now it cannot be said of this proposition that it expresses a conviction which is shared by many. Rather does it pass current among large classes of people as an axiom that information of decisive importance is to be expected from the Theory of Knowledge. Still there is no want either of protestations against an exaggerated estimation of it. And once this perception has become more general, much intellectual power will be withdrawn from a fruitless Scholasticism prevailing at this day, and will be devoted to useful work.

In the *fourth* place, it is further inferred from the above propositions that only the *Idealistic* philosophy can cope with the task of seeking a highest species of knowledge—that Idealistic philosophy which seeks the key for the interpretation of the world, and consequently the starting-point for such knowledge as will be final, in the *spiritual content of human life.* And further, this view is proved and carried out here by an organisation of human knowledge which gathers up the whole, without compromising any department of it in respect to its peculiar problems, under one supreme point of view, in such wise that an Idealistic interpre-

tation of the world such as has been mentioned comes to be the necessary consummation of that knowledge, and at the same time opens up a prospect of new problems embracing the whole matter of knowledge.

In the *fifth* place, this Idealistic view being presupposed, what is described as the basal problem of philosophy is that in which we ask whether knowledge has to be exalted above the life of moral activity or the latter above the former, whether man has to seek God chiefly through the former or through the latter, and at the same time the consummation of his personal life, the loftiest goal of his endeavour and the key for the interpretation of the world. And further, this question—which is no other than the question of the chief good, and no other again than the question of the relation of Religion, Knowledge, and Moral Life to one another—is declared, in express opposition to the opinion which puts the Theory of Knowledge in the forefront, to be the fundamental problem of all real philosophy.

In the consideration of this fundamental problem, in the *sixth* place, the *Christian* exaltation of the moral above the intellectual element, as set before us in the preaching of the Kingdom of God as the chief good of humanity, is maintained to be the correct decision of the question, and the one which alone answers to the reason in the history of humanity; and with regard to the opposite or theoretical Idealism, it is shown on the other hand that it involves a false estimate of knowledge as also of the means of knowledge; and since it almost inevitably allows man's knowledge of the world to preponderate, it thereby endangers if it does not

abandon the position of Idealism itself. In connection with this matter it is pointed out that the obligation resting on the individual to seek a highest type of knowledge is an *ethical* and not an intellectual obligation—a consideration which, inasmuch as the recognition of this fact cannot be avoided, serves on the other hand again to support the fundamental thesis.

In the *seventh* place, as the necessary correlative of this, *i.e.* the Christian, decision of the basal problem of philosophy, there is exhibited the *faith reposed in the Christian Revelation*, a faith in which our knowledge of the Kingdom of God as the chief good of men, that knowledge which determined the issue, first of all gains fixity and full proof. Finally,

In the *eighth* place, it is shown that Christianity as the religion of the Atonement with God through Christ, a fact which together with the Kingdom of God forms the main content of divine revelation and of the Christian faith, opens up for man, weak as he is and conscious of guilt, a way by which he may fully realise in practice the highest ethical Idealism and hold fast the (theoretical) faith as to God and the world which answers to it.

It has repeatedly appeared in the course of our studies that the proof which has to be presented for the truth of the Christian faith is not something that can be isolated, that it is rather connected in the closest manner with the whole organisation of Christian faith and life at a given time. From this it follows that such proof fills its place only if it rests at the same time on a true perception of the development of

Christian faith and thought, and is itself articulated as well as all that follows from it with the course of that development. In the demonstration here presented there has been careful regard among other things for this larger connection in which the proof stands. What has been said on that subject may perhaps be gathered up in the following propositions.

Firstly, Christianity is a supramundane reality, *i.e.* wherever it is realised it is a creation of the Divine Spirit and of its activity in the human heart. So regarded it needs no proof, because it proves itself, and nothing can take the place of this demonstration of the Spirit and of power; all the labours of theology can rather have merely the aim of paving the way for this demonstration. As such a supramundane reality, however, derived from God and uniting man with God, Christianity can become a *pure experience* only in the heart of man; whereas the impress it receives and the representation of it which is offered in the world point to worldly means, and never bear a *purely* Divine character, but always such as is worldly *at the same time*.

Secondly, Christianity is a historical reality, *i.e.* it is organically and essentially connected with the historical means of its realisation. Herein is rooted the fact that in respect to faith and the regulation of life it is for ever bound up with the historical revelation of God which was given at the beginning. But just from this its historical character it follows at the same time that notwithstanding its identity with itself, due to revelation and the Spirit of God, it is subject as respects the more definite representation and impress

it receives in the world to a progressive historical development. In particular the relation to the rest of man's mental and historical life, in which such change and progress are inherent, allows Christianity no option whatever on this head, unless it means to renounce its divine vocation, that of permeating and dominating the whole life of humanity. Divine revelation, too, forms no barrier to such development, because original Christianity, conformably to its supramundane character, did not in the first instance count on any permanence in the world; and therefore, since that original situation cannot be reproduced with essential truth at any later time, revelation contains no direct authoritative instructions as to the relation of faith to science and as to social arrangements—a fact in which, when regard is had to the progressive development which occurs in accordance with the will of God in these spheres, faith can only discern a wise dispensation of Divine Providence.

Thirdly, The proof of Christianity with which alone theology can and ought to concern itself is simply the form in which Christianity comes to an understanding with the intellectual life of a particular period; and consequently, since all the parts in the whole organism of culture are connected with each other, it is an element of the representation and impress acquired by Christianity at a given time which helps to determine the situation as a whole. But this proof never is, nor can it be, composed of such argumentation as follows the model of scientific demonstration, that which is detached from history and imposes constraint on the intellect—the assumption that such

argumentation is possible in questions of the highest knowledge being nothing but a baseless fiction.

Fourthly, The proof which forms the basis of that impress which the Christian faith acquires in ecclesiastical dogma is recognisable, in respect to its historical origin as also in respect to the influence it exercised on the form assumed by Christianity, as an integrant factor of *Catholicism*. The organisation of knowledge attempted by it, an organisation which in true Catholic fashion assigns to Christian truth the position of being partly the consummation of our natural knowledge of the world partly a supernatural addition to it, and consequently seeks to bring the whole of knowledge under the dominion of the Church—that organisation of knowledge has corresponding to it the analogous arrangement of social life, in which the universal spiritual monarchy of the visible Church, as the common organisation comprehending the Christian nations, claims the supreme and final guidance of all human affairs. By these two features together Catholicism is recognised as the product of Christian faith and ancient culture represented by the Græco-Roman spirit.

Fifthly, The breach which was effected on the ground of principle with this first great form assumed in the world by Christianity was caused by *the Reformation* of the sixteenth century, inasmuch as it restored the fundamental experience of the Christian—the justification of the sinner before God through faith in Christ leading to the renewal of the inward man—from the deterioration which it had suffered in connection with Catholicism. By this means the Reformation broke the power of the universal Church over the

consciences of men and recovered for moral life its independent significance for Christianity, a result which as a further consequence assisted the national states which were growing in vigour to gain a definitive victory in their conflict with the universal spiritual monarchy of the Middle Ages. But by this means it asserted no less the character of the highest knowledge as knowledge pertaining to *Faith*, a principle which is not compatible in the long run with the Catholic organisation of knowledge and must ultimately break it up, as surely as the Freedom of the Christian Man guaranteed by the gospel has subverted the Church's tutelage of social life.

Sixthly, The proof here presented for the truth of Christianity is nothing but the form in which the Christian faith, while fully preserving its truth as founded on God, succeeds in entering into an organic relation with the mental life of the present. Therefore, too, it is offered not as the arbitrary product of a present philosophical tendency, but as respects *its principle* as the result of the historical development of Protestantism. The organisation of knowledge aimed at by it throws no fetter over the sciences such as implies constraint from without or any limitation, but presupposes full freedom of movement for each of them in its own sphere; it proves, however, that as a whole, consistently with the *idea of purpose* which unites them organically, they reach their consummation only by means of the Christian faith. In the same way the Protestant ideal leaves to the Christian peoples and states their full independence, and seeks to unite them not by a common authoritative ecclesiastical organisa-

tion, but by the spiritual bond of the same faith and the same ethical aims. Here too, therefore, as on Catholic ground, the analogy of the two spheres is realised. In both together Protestantism proves to be the product of Christian faith and modern culture, in the same way as Catholicism resulted from the combination with ancient culture.

Seventhly, This proof too, like the Catholic organisation of Church and State, of Science and Faith, aims at securing *the supremacy of Christianity over the social and mental life of the Christian nations.* Only we are concerned not with the supremacy of the Church, but with that of the gospel as it brings freedom to nations and to the minds of men, conformably to the original meaning of Divine revelation. The historical interpretation of Holy Scripture and of the development of the Church is not proscribed in the interest of dogma, but vindicated as the firm foundation of Evangelical Protestantism. Finally, as we look at the matter generally, we are guided by our knowledge that practical not theoretical considerations are the decisive element in all human affairs, including questions of knowledge.

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